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WHAT TO WATCH IN SOCHI

• **9:30 a.m.** Alex Gough — the first Canadian to take home gold in a world-cup event and who currently sits fifth after two of four runs — has a chance to bring home Canada's first-ever Winter Olympics medal in luge.

• **10 a.m.** Figure skating's individual events begin with Canada's Meagan Duhamel and Eric Radford, seen here, featuring in the short program. The pair already has an Olympic medal as part of the group that took home silver in the team event.

GREG DOWNS/FOR METRO

Homophobia would do Ford no favours

Experts say a plan to entice social conservatives would backfire on mayor PAGE 3

'Leverage Mrs. Harper' ... so romantic

Conservative plans to woo Canadians revealed in lead-up to Valentine's Day PAGE 10

Retired Toronto couple murdered in Mexico home

Botched burglary?
Police chief says home was totally ransacked, two vehicles stolen

A Toronto couple living in Mexico was found dead in their home on Sunday in what police believe was a robbery gone wrong.

The couple was living in Ajijic, a small lakeside town popular with Canadian snowbirds, about 54 kilometres south of Guadalajara.

Local authorities have not identified the victims; however, close friends told a local newspaper the victims are Nina Discombe, 72, and Edward Kular, 84.

"It's a real shock. When I saw it on the news I just about had a heart attack," said Jean Kular, Edward Kular's sister in-law.

"I would have never thought that this sort of thing would happen."

The retired couple travelled to Mexico during the winter for years, Jean Kular said.

She said her brother-in-law was born and raised in Toronto, has two sons and two daughters and worked his entire life as a printer.

"What can I say? He's a terrific guy."

Roberto Arroyo, a spokesperson for the city of Chapala, said it appeared Kular had been beaten on the head with a small statue and Discombe was stabbed in the stomach with a kitchen knife.

Chapala police chief Ernesto Robles said the home had been completely ransacked.

Two cars with Ontario licence plates were among the items stolen, he added.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE/WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crime scene

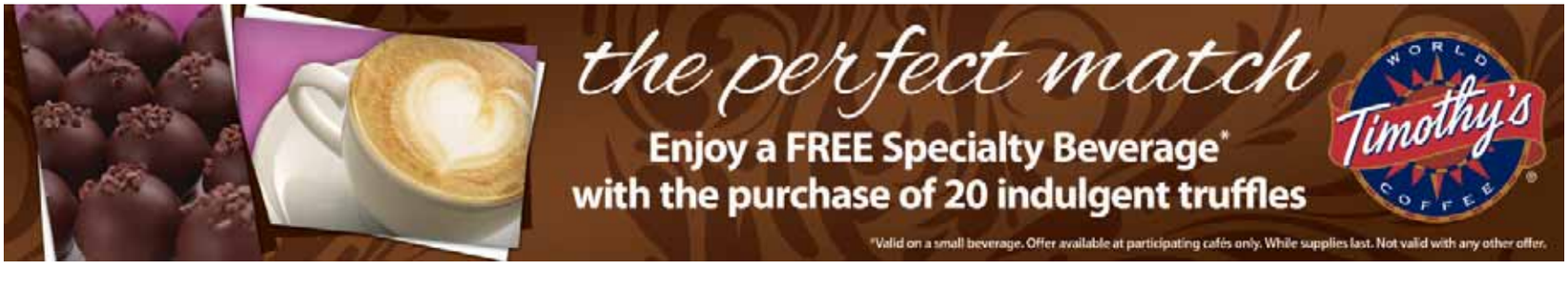
The grisly sight was first discovered by the couple's gardener, who found them lying in a pool of blood in the living room, a spokesman for the city of Chapala said.

- The couple had lived in the home for about six months.

GOLD RUSH CONTINUES

Top: Canada's Charles Hamelin celebrates after winning gold in men's 1,500-metre short-track speedskating in Sochi on Monday. Bottom: Canada's Alex Bilodeau kisses his girlfriend after nailing gold in the men's moguls final in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia, that day. More Olympic coverage, pages 26-28.

TOP: MORRY GASH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS; BOTTOM: SERGEI GRITS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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Baby's first mugshot?

Newborn spent first day in jail

Cindy Thompson and her newborn Kyra. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

She may be the youngest kid to ever end up in the slammer.

Within minutes of being born in a police station parking lot early Saturday morning, Kyra Davis was whisked into a holding cell — the only place the newborn and her mother, Cindy Thompson, could rest before paramedics arrived.

Kyra, it seems, doesn't take things slow.

"I woke up at 6 o'clock and I had the baby at 6:36," said Thompson from her home in Sharbot Lake, Ont., where she awoke Saturday morning in a bit of pain, and got ready to go the hospital.

"I got in the truck, and it just went from a little bit of pain to a lot of pain very fast," said Thompson.

Six minutes later, her water broke. Thompson yelled at her husband to call the police.

The couple was directed to a nearby detachment to wait for paramedics.

In -15 C weather, police had to act quickly, getting Kyra bundled up and finding a place for the family to rest.

That place just happened to be a jail cell.

The paramedics arrived and took Thompson and Kyra to the hospital. They were released Sunday, and Thompson said they're doing very well.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Courting homophobes a bobbleheaded idea

Riding the hate train. Trying to grow Ford Nation via message of hate not a great move, say political spin doctors

If Rob Ford hopes to gain votes by appearing homophobic, Toronto's mayor is in for a surprise come election day, says Darrell Bricker, the CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs.

Throughout his 14 years at city hall, Ford has been dogged by accusations of homophobia. But up until recently, he's always seemed to make efforts not to push too far.

That changed in the past seven days — first due to his vow never to attend the Pride parade and then after he tried to remove a rainbow flag flying outside city hall. That has led to speculation Ford is deliberately trying to woo socially conservative voters by distinguishing himself from other candidates who are merely fiscal conservatives.

A niche better not catered to

"If you're ... anti-Semitic or racist or homophobic, if you have hate in your heart in any way, you're going to be speaking to a smaller audience."

Darrell Bricker, CEO Ipsos Public Affairs

Several former members of Ford's staff say the mayor spoke openly about the fact that opposing same-sex marriage was important for his base.

If this is the strategy, Bricker warns it's going to backfire.

"When you take a look at Canadian values these days the thing that is really rising, in terms of defining what a Canadian is, is your degree of tolerance. It's not specifically related to the LGBT community. It's everyone who is not part of what Canada used to be — white Anglo-Saxon Protestant," said Bricker.

Polling shows that suburban conservative voters are decided on this issue, in that it's a non-issue, Bricker said, adding that, at best, Ford is speaking to less than 20 percent of Toronto's population.

Barry Watson, CEO of Environics Research Group, agrees, noting that over the past decade, Torontonians have become increasingly supportive of all forms of social diversity, including sexual orientation.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Will texters be scared straight by hearse?

Toronto police have teamed up with a local funeral home to send a macabre message: You could end up dead. In a campaign called "That Text or Call Could End It All," police are using a hearse to pull over distracted drivers. The campaign to get the message across that texting at the wheel is essentially impaired driving launched Monday. Distracted driving includes texting and driving, holding your phone and talking, and playing on your device at a stoplight. Unless you're stopped with the car in "park" on the side of the road or in a parking lot, you can be charged.

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Potential price hike

Beer drinkers' frothy lament?

Beer drinkers in the GTA and across Ontario can expect to pay higher prices if alcohol sales are deregulated in the province, the president of The Beer Store is warning.

"When Alberta privatized its alcohol system, the price of beer skyrocketed," Ted

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moroz said Monday in a speech to the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

On stage

Witches of Wicked head back to T.O.

Toronto can get ready to defy gravity once again.

Wicked, arguably this city's favourite musical, will make its fourth visit here, starting Sept. 3 at the Ed Mirvish Theatre.

"This was the city where the touring company of Wicked played its first engagement in 2005," said producer David Stone in an interview. "We've always thought of Toronto as home ever since then."

That production broke box office records for a theatrical engagement in this city and its two return visits in 2006 and 2010 did the same.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In all its colours

Rainbow flag to fly at legislature

Mayor Rob Ford may want to take down the rainbow flag at Toronto City Hall, but just up the street provincial politicians are ready to raise the flag at the Ontario legislature for the remainder of the Olympic Games.

The rainbow flag — a long-standing symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights and pride — has been raised at various city halls and municipal buildings across Canada in a sign of solidarity after Russia passed an anti-gay law.

Ford said last week that he wanted the flag taken down because the Olympics "is not about someone's sexual preference." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Local researchers say 'heading' soccer ball needs more study

Medical journal. Analysis of the impact on soccer players is scant compared to other sports, researcher says

There is lots of attention paid to head injuries in football and hockey, but not so much in soccer, a game in which "heading the ball" is an integral part of team play.

In the medical journal Brain Injury, Toronto researchers call for more research into the cumulative impact of heading, a practice that can occur thousands of times during a player's career.

"You are getting hit in the head, but just not enough to give you a full-blown concussion. But what does that do over the long term to the brain?" asked Dr. Tom Schweizer, director of the Neuroscience Research Program of St. Michael's Hospital.

When compared to research on head injuries in hockey and football — for which there are "hundreds" of studies on each sport — analysis of the impact on soccer players is scant, said study co-author Monica Maher. A literature review turned up only 49 studies from around the world, dating back to 1989.

Hockey and football are more physically aggressive sports and athletes do indeed suffer more concussions, Maher acknowledged.

"But soccer is unique in that the head is an integral part of game play," she said, explaining why the sport is deserving of more attention.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Monica Maher throws up a soccer ball at the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute in Toronto on Monday. She is one of the researchers calling for more study into the cumulative impact of heading a soccer ball. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A growing sport in Canada

- Soccer is the most popular sport in the world. In Canada, it is the number one participatory sport for boys and girls aged 5 to 14, according to the Canadian Soccer Association. It is the fastest growing sport in the country with 44 per cent of youth participating in 2005, up from 32 per cent in 1998.
- Toronto researchers are particularly interested in learning more about potential long-term cognitive and behavioural consequences for athletes who suffer acute or repeated concussions, or multiple "sub-concussive" head impacts (blows to the head that do not cause concussion symptoms).
- The limited research that does exist shows it may contribute to cognitive decline or impairment.

Parent-teacher night axed at some schools

Many Toronto elementary schools have cancelled the traditional parent-teacher interviews for February report cards — which go home this week — because there's no professional development day on which to schedule them.

Toronto Catholic District School Board trustees say they've heard from upset parents asking that the second interview be reinstated.

"We are working with our (teacher) unions to send out a joint letter to parents to know that for this year, teachers will make themselves available to meet with parents, as they always do, at any time in lieu of the fact that there's no formal parent-teacher interview night," said Catholic board chair Jo-Ann Davis.

The first elementary report card, which goes out in the fall, is followed by scheduled parent-teacher interviews.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Coming soon — Rob Ford: The Movie?

Crazy Town. Two major film producers have bought the rights to reporter's book on Ford

Two major movie producers have picked up the rights to Toronto Star reporter Robyn Doolittle's Crazy Town: The Rob Ford Story, promising a dramatic treatment of the man and machinations behind the scenes of the political turmoil.

Producers Daniel Iron and Lance Samuels, who worked together on the 2010 film The Bang Bang Club, are taking the reins on the project. Iron, who grew up in Toronto, said he wants to bring it to the screen as an "emotive" feature rife with drama.

"Part of it is a story about the city, so I think it's important to see the city, to see downtown, to see the suburbs … the story has great drama in it," said Iron, who compared his vision for the book to Game Change, an HBO political drama about the rise and fall of Sarah Palin.

Iron and Samuels' flair for serious drama was part of what made their shop stand out to Doolittle, who had "several" offers to buy the film rights.

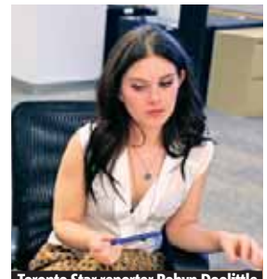
Quoted

"It's not our intention to do a salacious farce — this is a serious story." Daniel Iron, producer

"When I met Danny, he seemed really interested in it, and he seemed interested in it beyond the comedy aspect of the whole thing," said Doolittle. "There are, of course, elements of dark comedy that we have seen played out on YouTube, but there's a real seriousness to this story as well. He seemed interested in all aspects of it."

Doolittle has been investigating the scandal surrounding the mayor for more than two years. Her book chronicles generations of his family and provides greater insight into Ford.

As for who will play the mayor? Iron says people are researching it. "That's obviously a difficult casting issue," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE


Toronto Star reporter Robyn Doolittle
SCOTT SIMMIE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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'Embarrassed' mayor admits lying about crack

A scene from the Ford Nation YouTube show. SCREENGRAB/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

After months of insisting he had been truthful during a drug scandal, Mayor Rob Ford has admitted he lied to the public because he was embarrassed.

Ford made the admission on his own terms, in a YouTube show called Ford Nation which was posted online Monday.

"Did I experiment with drugs? Yes I have. Why did I lie? I think everybody in the world has lied, because I was embarrassed," Ford said, while looking directly into the camera.

"I didn't want to tell the truth. That's the only answer I can give. That's as straightforward as I can be."

Ford's revelation came in response to a written question from "Sandra from Bangkok, Thailand," who wondered why the mayor lied about his "substance abuse problem" when initially asked.

"When they ask me, it's very, very humiliating in front of the world to say yes … people either lie to cover up, people lie because they're embarrassed, that's why I lied."

Ford's new YouTube show — co-hosted with his brother Coun. Doug Ford — gives the mayor a renewed chance to take his message to the masses in a controlled manner.

It comes months after a weekly radio talk show hosted by the Ford brothers was ended on NewsTalk 1010 and a Sun News Network series was cancelled after its debut due to its costs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rebuttal

A video channel dedicated solely to countering the new Ford show has already sprung up. Ford National Rebuttal has already posted more than three minutes of clips of Rob Ford scandals and controversial statements dating back to his time as a city councillor.

Double helix could lead to double date

Gene-ius of love. Does DNA matchmaking result in chemistry?

TREVOR GREENWAY
Metro in Ottawa

Hey there, nice immune system. Wanna date?

Prospective daters might not be using that pick up line, but an Ottawa matchmaker is.

Misty River Introductions has teamed up with Toronto biotechnology firm Instant Chemistry to start matching couples based on DNA. More specifically, the romance firm is pairing up people who have different immune systems, as Misty River owner Linda Miller says "studies have shown that people are more likely to choose somebody with a more different immune system than their own."

It's basic science, says Miller, who has been matching couples for the past 20 years.

"You are more physically attractive to someone with a different immune system," she said, although she adds, looks are almost everything.

Clients submit a cheek swab to Misty River and the tests go back to Queen's University for analyzing. In the meantime, Miller does her work, matching up couples based on socio-economic backgrounds, religion, interests, age and when she has a list of potential matches, she will then apply the DNA tests to see which people would be most physically attracted.

DNA samples from clients of Misty River Introductions are bundled off to a Toronto biotech firm for testing. CONTRIBUTED

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New Zealand

Japanese whaling ship raises ire

New Zealand sharply criticized Japan on Monday for allowing a whaling ship to enter New Zealand's maritime economic zone.

The government said Japan ignored requests that the Shonan Maru 2 steer clear of New Zealand's economic zone as the whaler pursued an anti-whaling vessel operated by protest group Sea Shepherd.

Japan defended the incident, saying that it was necessary to protect the whalers from the activists' protest. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Operation Angry Birds

Cockfighting raids in N.Y.

More than 3,000 birds were rescued in a cockfighting takedown in New York this weekend that resulted in nine arrests, N.Y. authorities said.

"Operation Angry Birds" simultaneously targeted locations in Queens, Brooklyn and Ulster County with assistance from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Ulster County Sheriff's office, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said in a statement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thames bursts its banks

A woman is pushed through a flooded street in Datchet, England, on Monday. The River Thames burst its banks after reaching its highest level in years, flooding riverside towns upstream of London. Floods overwhelmed sandbagging efforts, leaving areas underwater. SANG TAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Russian icon a hero to one Canadian

Vladislav Tretiak, centre, visits Michael Hunter, left, and his mother, Julie Hunter, at a Moscow hospital in 1987. The Russian hockey hero helped boost the Canadian's spirits after Hunter fell seriously ill during a school field trip to the former Soviet Union. COURTESY MICHAEL HUNTER

Vladislav Tretiak. In 1987, Michael Hunter ended up in a hospital during a school trip to Russia — and then got an unexpected visitor

FERNANDO CARNEIRO
Metro in Toronto

When Vladislav Tretiak lit the Olympic Cauldron at Friday's Opening Ceremony in Sochi, one Toronto-area man beamed as bright as the flame.

Michael Hunter, a 41-year-old insurance agent living in Bolton, was visited by the Russian hockey great while in a Moscow hospital 27 years ago.

In 1987, Hunter took part in a school field trip to the Soviet Union. His Crohn's disease — a serious bowel condition — flared up during the flight.

While the roughly 60 other children from Notre Dame Secondary in Brampton and one other school spent 10 days touring Moscow and St. Petersburg, Hunter spent two weeks in the hospital.

"Did I see much of Russia? No, I saw the intersection across from the hospital," Hunter said. "I was numb after the surgery and didn't have a lot of life in me. I didn't know what was happening because no one spoke English."

Fortunately, Hunter's mother, Julie Hunter, was a chaperone on the trip. She was invited for dinner by the Canadian ambassador in Moscow, and when it was mentioned that Hunter was a former hockey goalie, the ambassador said that Tretiak was in town, and offered to invite him to visit the hospital.

"When word got out that Tretiak was coming in, I had reason to get up and something to get excited about," Hunter said. "And it wasn't just me: The entire wing of the hospital was excited. They started asking why this national hero was coming in to see this sick Canadian guy."

Tretiak arrived with a bouquet of flowers for Hunter's mother and goaltending manuals that he had written for Hunter — all in Russian, of course.

"He stayed for half an hour or so, and we took some pictures. I was very impressed with him. He's a very big guy and friendly," Hunter said. "I was so thankful that he went out of his way to come see me. I think that he speeded up my recovery time."

Hunter said Tretiak was a good choice to be one of the two people chosen to light the Flame.

"He's a national icon," he said. "You could tell from the reaction of the nurses."

Star goalie

- Vladislav Tretiak is considered to be one of the greatest goaltenders in the history of hockey.
- He became internationally famous after his performance in the Summit Series against Canada in 1972.
- While he attracted the attention of many NHL teams, it was Montreal that ultimately drafted him in 1983. The Soviet government blocked that move.

Vladislav Tretiak approaches the Olympic cauldron during Friday's opening ceremony in Sochi. MATT SLOCUM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Twitter. Canadian thrust into spotlight thanks to the #problems in #Sochi

Athletes trapped in bathrooms. Hotels still under construction. Clowns wandering the streets.

Alexander Broad is doing his best to document everything wrong and weird at the Winter Games with Twitter's latest satire-of-the-moment account, @SochiProblems.

The Internet sensation, which began Tuesday, had already amassed over 331,000 followers by Sunday. Broad was hoping for at most 30.

"Never in a million years. I made it as a joke. The entire idea of this came as a joke, something to laugh at," said the Pickering native of the unexpected spotlight.

The word giant doesn't do Broad's popularity justice — @SochiProblems has more followers than the official Sochi Games or Canadian Olympic team's accounts, and has caught the attention of U.S. media such as the Washington Post, USA Today and ABC.

That's got Broad under pressure to watch the Olympics all the time for material.

What's your problem?

"From there on it just kind of grew. It's sprouted into this giant thing."

Alexander Broad, creator of @SochiProblems on Twitter, who spilled Tim Hortons coffee on himself (a uniquely Canadian problem) and then went on a search for Sochi problems

"I think the biggest thing, I feel like it's just like I've got to stay alert to everything a lot more," he says, adding he draws the line at staying up through the night.

Now Broad is wondering if a Twitter account started as a joke should become more.

"The whole idea of this entire account was a satire," he said. "I think that's what a lot of people are calling it. I made the entire thing out of a joke, and I have tweeted things that have … some political-ish type things.

"But a lot of the things I've tweeted there's a lot of humour in it as well. So I'm still not entirely sure." THE CANADIAN PRESS

We're watching you … ski

A drone camera flies about the slopestyle course during a freestyle skiing slopestyle training session in Sochi. Drones spotted hovering around the Olympic slopes aren't searching for terrorists or protesters, they're being used to transmit live video of snowboard and ski-jump competitions to your TV screen. Drones are increasingly common at sporting events, and these Olympic Games are the highest-profile showcase yet for their broadcasting uses. SERGEI GRITS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IOC. Athletes told they can't honour dead friends while competing in events

IOC is telling Olympic athletes they may not wear armbands or stickers during competition to commemorate the dead.

The Olympic body said Monday it sent a letter to Norwegian Olympic officials after four female cross-country skiers wore black armbands in memory of an athlete's brother, who died on the eve of the Games.

The International Olympic Committee also told freestyle skiers not to wear stickers on their helmets in tribute to Canadian halfpipe skier Sarah Burke, who died after a crash in training two years ago.

"We would say the competitions themselves, which are a place of celebration, are probably not the right place to really do that," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said. "We would like to keep that separate."

Adams said the IOC has "huge sympathy" for Burke and is willing to help athletes remember her at news conferences or a ceremony — but not at the competition sites.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Punk-rock parliament?

Pussy Riot members say they may give politics 'a try'

Two members of Russian punk band Pussy Riot say they may run for seats in this year's election for the Moscow city parliament.

Nadya Tolokonnikova, appearing alongside fellow band member Maria Alyokhina at the Berlin film festival Monday, said politics "is worth a try."

The election will most likely be held in September, although no exact date has been set.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Canada

Laureen Harper to be highlighted

Prime Minister Stephen Harper adjusts his tie as he and his wife, Laureen, board an aircraft in South Africa in December. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The federal Conservatives have plotted a road map to a 2015 election campaign that counts on a massive donor- and voter-targeting effort, a communications onslaught, and a bid to "leverage" the popularity of Laureen Harper, the prime minister's wife, according to documents obtained by Torstar News Service.

The 70-page slide show presentation to the Conservative party's national council last weekend by executive director Dimitri Soudas appears to acknowledge that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has work to do to reach out to Canadians and win their trust for another government.

Under "Tactical Plans/ Strategies," it says the party will "connect (the) PM with people," "leverage Mrs. Harper" and launch a "With Mrs. Harper" video series among others to put a more human face on the government and grab eyeballs in the digital age. The document was sent anonymously to Torstar News Service after the weekend meeting.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

2015 campaign plans

The PowerPoint presentation is a quarter-by-quarter blueprint of timelines and actions to be taken through 2014.

- It defines what success looks like: "Ensure we don't wake up on Oct. 20, 2015 with Justin Trudeau as PM."
- It makes no mention whatsoever of NDP Leader Tom Mulcair.
- The presentation opens with several slides mocking Trudeau as a lightweight before laying out three priorities of raising more money, increasing the Conservative vote and motivating more volunteers.
- The party says it intends to "break news over digital channels," and better use Twitter Card buys and YouTube.

Trial. Ontario physician in court on conspiracy to facilitate terrorism

A man who once auditioned for the Canadian Idol TV show has pleaded not guilty to a terrorism charge.

Khurram Syed Sher, a physician from London, Ont., is being tried by judge alone in Ontario Superior Court.

Sher, wearing a grey suit and blue tie, observed the proceedings from a small table near his counsel.

During initial arguments, one of Sher's lawyers, Giuseppe Cipriano, made preliminary points about the legal nature of conspiracy as it relates to the charge.

Sher, 31, was charged in August 2010 with conspiracy to facilitate terrorism.

Following the high-profile arrest, police said they seized terrorist literature, videos and manuals, along with dozens of electronic circuit boards allegedly designed to detonate homemade bombs remotely.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bill C-23

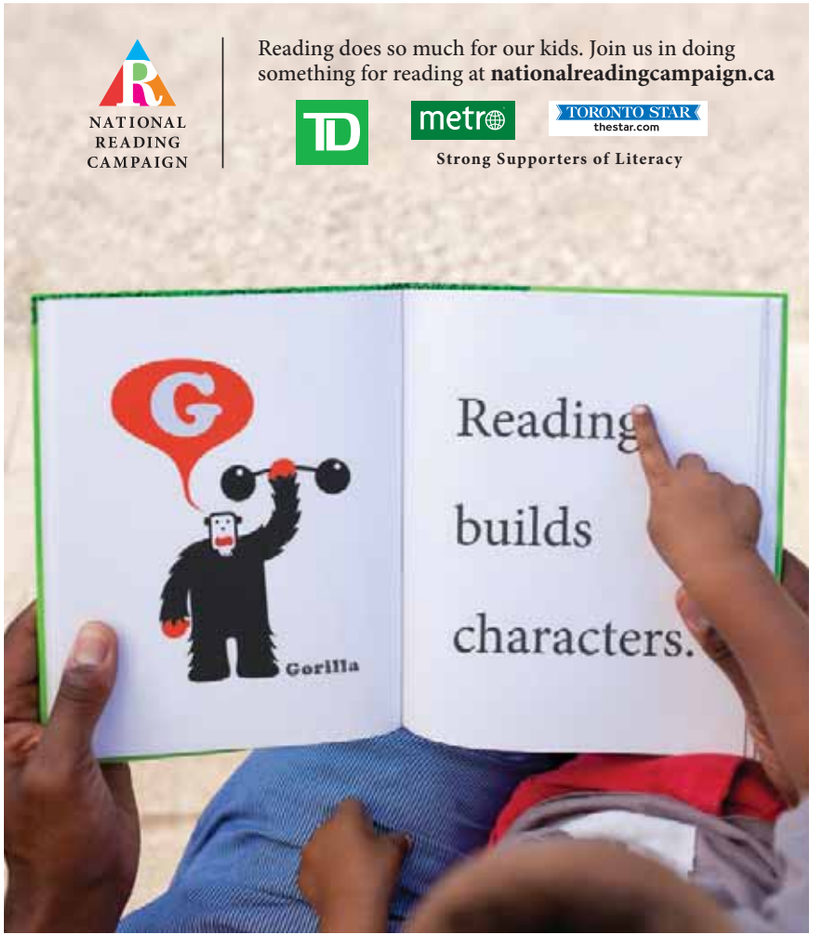
NDP opposes Harper's election law changes

The New Democrats are launching a national petition against the Harper government's proposed overhaul of federal election laws.

The NDP charges the bill is designed to import U.S.-style voter suppression tactics and benefit the ruling Conservatives.

The NDP contends the bill would prevent thousands of students, seniors and aboriginal people from voting, by imposing stricter rules for ID at polls. The NDP also says it will increase the influence of money by raising the donation limit and campaign spending limit.

THE CANADIAN PRESS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Focus

Killer tiger terrorizing villagers in north India

Hunter. Big cat's 10th victim was 50-year-old man collecting firewood Sunday night in the forest

A tiger prowling near villages in northern India killed its 10th person in six weeks, a day after eluding a trap set by hunters with a live calf as bait.

The animal ate parts of the man's leg and abdomen before being scared away by villagers waving shovels and metal rods in the forest outside Kalgarh village in Uttarakhand state, according to Saket Badola, deputy director of the national park.

"On Saturday night the tigress almost fell in trap and was close to the calf," Badola said. "But she did not attack the bait and left silently."

This undated photo shows a tiger at the Corbett Tiger Reserve in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand. Forest officials said a tiger that strayed from the park killed its 10th victim Sunday. CORBETT TIGER RESERVE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The female tiger is believed to have strayed from Jim Corbett National Park, India's oldest national park, which was established in 1936 to provide endangered Bengal tigers with safe territory.

Reports that a killer tiger was on the loose began circulating Dec. 29, when a 65-year-old man was mauled in Sambhal district of Uttar Pradesh state, across the border from Uttarakhand. Since then, thousands of terrified villagers have been told to watch out for the animal and to avoid the forests.

The tiger has been on the prowl across an area spanning some 130 kilometres.

"The animal has started attacking humans because it is not getting its natural prey," said Rupek De, chief wildlife warden of Uttar Pradesh.

He said the hunters hired to kill the animal were having trouble tracking it in dense forests. The team also was understaffed; only three of the six hunters hired for the job showed up for work.

On Sunday, angry villagers seized a national forestry office, demanding protection and compensation for the families of the dead.

"We can understand the predicament of the villagers," Badola said. "The villagers do not have toilets in their homes. They go out in the open or forest areas to answer nature's call. In this scenario it is difficult to give protection to each and every villager. We have advised them to move in groups."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya. Gay activists urge Ugandan leader to reject anti-homosexuality bill

Dressed in rainbow wigs and masks, gays and lesbians in Kenya on Monday joined a global effort to protest against an anti-homosexuality bill passed by Uganda's parliament that is now in the hands of the president.

Activists are trying to pressure Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni into not signing the bill, which increases prison times for homosexual acts. The bill, which passed in December, also prescribes a seven-year jail term for a person who conducts a marriage ceremony for same-sex couples.

Museveni has opposed the bill as harsh, but gay activists say Museveni's other recent thoughts on the matter — that gays are often "abnormal" people who should be "rehabilitated" — fuel discrimination against gays in a country where homosexuality is already illegal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenyan gays and lesbians wear masks to preserve their anonymity as they stage a rare protest outside the Uganda High Commission in Nairobi, Kenya, Monday. BEN CURTIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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It's the end of the line Down Under

Vehicles speed past a Toyota dealership in Sydney, Australia, on Monday. Toyota announced it will stop making cars in Australia by the end of 2017, spelling the end to auto manufacturing in the country, where car companies say high production costs and tough competition have made the business unviable. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flap over Flappy Bird app

Flew too close to sun?
Like Icarus, the game had a fast rise and fall

ELISABETH BRAW
Metro World News in London, U.K.

Apparently we're all Flappy Bird addicts: when Dong Nguyen, the Vietnamese creator of the popular mobile game, announced that he's removing it from online stores, it became big news. What makes the simple app so popular? Metro spoke with Vili Lehdonvirta, a research fellow at Oxford University's Oxford Internet Institute.

What's the secret behind Flappy Bird's success?

If you look at what's inside the game, the retro visual style borrows from classic games like Super Mario, which invokes nostalgia in the user.

But Flappy Bird got a lot of criticism.

Yes, a lot of praise and a lot of criticism. It created controversy (*questions have been raised whether bots were used to boost its app chart popularity – ed.*), which helped it become a phenomenon.

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The giving network

You know what's cool? Giving away $970M in shares

Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan, were the most generous American philanthropists in 2013, with a donation of 18 million shares of Facebook stock, valued at more than $970 million US, to a Silicon Valley non-profit in December.

The Chronicle of Philanthropy reported Monday that Zuckerberg's donation was the largest charitable gift on the public record in 2013.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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Natural gas: $4.59 US (-$0.07)
Dow Jones: 15,801.79 (+ 7.71)

LOVELY TIME TO NOT DO THIS

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

I've always thought of Valentine's Day as a mid-range event on my holiday ranking scale. I'd probably place it somewhere above the binge-drinking mess of St. Patrick's Day but not nearly as exciting as Canada Day. I know the whole thing has very little to do with true love and a lot to do with selling expensive gifts but I'm a sucker for candy conversation hearts and cheesy greeting cards nonetheless.

February 14 doesn't have to be the most romantic day of the year, but if you find yourself coupled up this Friday and you'd like to stay that way then you should probably try to put in a little effort. There's still plenty of time to plan something special for your significant other, so here are some guidelines on what not to do this Valentine's Day.

Do nothing. Disappointment abounds during this time of year, especially when people aren't up front about their expectations. You don't have to deliver a dozen overpriced roses or orchestrate a private dinner for two in a candlelit restaurant, but the least you can do is pick up a card and scribble down a few heartfelt sentences. When it comes to matters of the heart, no one ever regrets being over prepared.

Break up with your beau. You'd think this was a pretty obvious V-Day "don't," but according to a recent survey by online dating site AYI.com, 22 per cent of individuals polled said that they had been dumped on Feb. 14. It's hard to believe that so many people possess such poor timing but perhaps it's understandable given all the stress that surrounds this particular holiday. Even so, try to have a heart and wait 24 hours before delivering the bad news to your soon-to-be ex.

Protest just for the sake of it. We all know Valentine's Day is special because of the person you spend it with and not because of how much money you spend on them. However, restaurant owners, florists and purveyors of gourmet chocolates count on this annual event to bring in some cash during an otherwise slow winter season. Rather than self-righteously boycotting the Hallmark holiday, why not show your love by supporting small businesses in your area. Find your sweetheart a unique and thoughtful gift from an independent local retailer and it'll be a win for everybody.

Give in to social media envy. Let's face it, this Friday your various social media newsfeeds are going to blow up with heavily filtered images of bountiful floral bouquets and sickeningly sweet proclamations of love. Some digital sentiments might be touching; the majority will be annoying and may leave you feeling jealous and depressed. Do yourself a favour and step away from the keyboard so that you can focus on your own relationship.

Feel obligated to leave the house. Never underestimate the appeal of a low-key night in. With chilly temperatures outside and season two of House of Cards debuting on Netflix this Friday, a cosy date on the couch is a perfectly lovely (not to mention inexpensive) option. It might not look as impressive on Instagram but nothing says long-term relationship success like sweatpants and takeout Chinese food.

ZOOM

A growing visual culture

COURTESY CASEY GUTTERIDGE/THE BIG BANG UK YOUNG SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS FAIR

British actor stars in microbial art

A microbiologist has made a 'self-portrait' of Stephen Fry (from The Hobbit) by using the actor's own bacteria.

Zachary Copfer, from Ohio, holds a master's degree in fine art and a bachelor's in biological sciences, and says he sees this as an exciting way of exploiting the art within science to bring to life a sterile and boring field. METRO

Q & A

Newest selfie

ZACHARY COPFER
Microbiologist/ photographer based in Cincinnati, Ohio.

How did you manage to get the bacteria to 'paint' this?
I received a sample of bacteria taken using a swab from Stephen's arm. Then I made a negative from a digital photo of him and placed it on a bacteria-laden petri dish. I exposed the plate to ultraviolet radiation, killing any microbes in certain parts of the dish. This allows others to grow in areas where the negative is. I then placed it in an incubator for two days to let the culture grow. Sometimes it can take four or five tries to get the bacteria to grow where you want it to.

What is the artistic meaning behind your work?
It touches upon the concept of an artwork's ownership, what can be regarded as the ultimate selfie.

Clickbait

IRENE KUAN
Metro Online

Organizing your own work projects is hard enough, but try adding multiple people into an assignment. This can be a big headache if organization is a challenge for you. Here are some online tools to help track project collaborations.

ISTOCK IMAGES

Asana:

Manage your teamwork without email. This free web and mobile application allows you to create projects and put conversations and tasks together. Set due dates, assign your group members tasks and have Asana track and remind them of impending deadlines.

Basecamp:

This web-based project-management tool has been around since 2004 but was revamped in 2012. Basecamp can offer to-do lists, wiki-style web-based documents, file sharing and a messaging system, to name just some of the functions. The 2012 version of the tool allows users to use their preferred language in projects and messaging.

Pivotal Tracker:

This web tool offers a friendly user experience for team projects, offering the ability for candid conversations to optimize communication and teamwork. Are your work partners in a different time zone? Not a problem! Pivitol Tracker will help everybody stay in sync and projects stay on course.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Drones are used in Sochi to capture ski events. If you had a drone, what would you use it for?

@mensaghic: Scope out traffic before rush hour.

@deb2v: If I had a drone, I will use it to deliver burritos.

@bcladyo: I would use drones for beer delivery! :)

@sykesoh: to pick up rob ford when he is on a famous stupor

@lisambungay: watching my kids when I leave the room.

@newcybersol: I would have a drone follow our beloved premier Alison Redford. Maybe that would keep her spending in check!

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It's time you level with your significant other: there's no way you're going to watch The Notebook on Valentine's Day. And not just this year — you're talking about never again. The same goes for Love Actually, The Vow, When Harry Met Sally or any of the other certified V-Day classics. Here are five choices to make February 14 a little less boring and a little more cinematically stimulating.

ADAM NAYMAN
scene@metronews.ca

5 Films that aren't The Notebook

Don't Look Now

Nic Roeg's peerlessly creepy thriller about a couple menaced in Venice by witchy sisters and a red-cloaked serial killer was controversial in its day for the seemingly unsimulated sex scenes between stars Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie; look past the scandal, though, and you'll see a tender portrait of lovers brought together — and ultimately torn apart — by grief.

Friday Night

Claire Denis is a filmmaker who loves filming bodies in motion, and she's never had lovelier choreography than in this sublime 2002 feature, which describes a brief encounter between two strangers: a woman on the verge of moving in with her boyfriend, and a stranger she meets during an epic Parisian traffic jam. The City of Lights has rarely looked so sumptuous, and the film's tone is so intimate that you may feel like you're intruding.

Mulholland Drive

This is one of the most mysterious movies ever made, but its cryptic plot and bizarre imagery can't obscure the sweetness of the scenes between Naomi Watts and Laura Elena Harring as amateur sleuths who gradually fall in love with one another. Their blonde-brunette/Betty-Veronica dynamic is framed playfully, yet there's also real passion there.

A Perfect Getaway

Don't let the B-movie packaging and cast (Steve Zahn, Milla Jovovich) fool you; this underrated 2009 thriller about two couples honeymooning in Hawaii is romantic at heart. The relationship between redneck tourists Timothy Olyphant and Kiele Sanchez is adorable, even if the movie keeps floating the possibility they're also serial killers.

Sightseers

Vacationing psychopaths are also the subject of this demented British import, in which a sheltered Englishwoman (Alice Lowe) discovers that her new boyfriend (Nick Oram) has some worrisome hobbies. Ben Wheatley's pitch-black comedy is not for the faint of heart, but it's a brilliant deconstruction of romantic comedy tropes.

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DVD review

The Counselor

Director. Ridley Scott

Stars. Michael Fassbender, Cameron Diaz, Brad Pitt

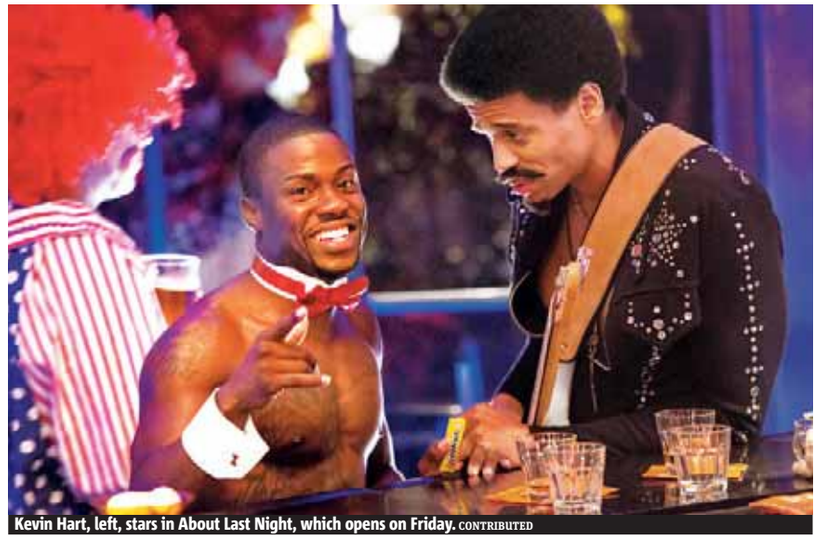
Golden tongues and black hearts enliven this uncommonly erudite thriller built around the pulpiest of stories. Ridley Scott directs and gaudily attired A-listers supply wicked glamour, in a drug-trade scenario that traverses the globe but mainly straddles the Texas-Mexico border. Cormac McCarthy's screenwriting debut presents Michael Fassbender's title lawyer in the classic situation, familiar to students of Greek myth and Shakespearean drama: a moral man tempted by sin and hubris and brought low by fate.

PETER HOWELL

Kevin's got a lot of Hart for his fans

About Last Night. Comedian is set to release his next film in 2014 and he's all about connecting on Twitter

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood



Kevin Hart, left, stars in About Last Night, which opens on Friday. CONTRIBUTED

Kevin Hart is already having a pretty decent 2014, with last month's Ride Along breaking January box office records and bringing in more than $90 million worldwide in its first three weeks of release. And he's hoping that success continues in February with About Last Night. One thing is for sure, he's not letting bad reviews get to him — even when the critics are trying to get his attention.

You're incredibly active on social media.
I'm very serious about it. It's not a game, this is not something I take for granted. I'm very, very, very committed to social media and interacting with my fans the way that I do. It's something that I think people really, really take for granted, and they shouldn't. It's free promotion, but at the same time it keeps you in contact with your fan base.

When did it first occur to you to utilize it so much?
Well, from jump. When I first saw my numbers going to what they grew to, I said I would be a fool to not dive in as much as I could because this is basically promotion that the studio doesn't have. This is you having a direct connect with your fans. When I say to my fans, "First 200 people to meet me at Applebee's, I want to treat you," they're going to come. And those 200 people in there get to meet, connect with me, talk to me. You have to have ways of showing that you are giving back — "Thank you, guys, for what you do, which is support me." I'm not a ghost. I'm not the legend that just walks and you never see, plain and simple.

I saw someone included your Twitter handle in a bad review of Ride Along, which seems like bad form.
A critic's job is to critique. At the end of the day, as an actor, if you allow that stuff to get to you, you're a fool. But you've got to ask yourself how do critics feel when they critique something, they trash it and then it shows up and it's a record-breaking box office hit? Then you just have to go back into your critic hole and critique some more. But I don't knock it, it's what you're paid to do. Your job is to critique and that's your world of expertise. But if [the film is] getting an A cinema score — which means everybody's walking out happy — then that means you have to question yourself, what you like and where your expectations are.

TV viewing a 'shifting' behaviour

TV viewers increasingly are watching programs on their own schedule, according to a Nielsen company media study released Monday.

In the past year, time-shifting of television content grew by almost two hours, averaging 13 hours per month, the study found. Viewers averaged nearly 134 hours of live TV viewing a month in 2013, down nearly three hours from 2012.

Television still remains central to media consumption, the study found, despite the increase in time-shifted viewing and streaming video through a computer or smartphone.

On average, American consumers own four digital devices, the report found. The majority of U.S. households own high-definition TV sets, Internet-connected computers and smartphones, while nearly half also own digital video recorders and gaming consoles.

The average consumer spends about 60 hours a week viewing content across various platforms, Nielsen found.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Breaking Bad is one of those shows viewers are increasingly watching on their own schedule, according to a study released Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

'Judge away,' says Stewart as she tries to find herself

Kristen Stewart reveals to Marie Claire magazine that instead of throwing herself into film work following her breakup with Robert Pattinson, she spent most of 2013 taking road trips with friends, working on her poetry and discovering things about herself — like the fact that she doesn't necessarily have a romantic type. "You don't know who you will fall in love with. You just don't. You don't control it," she says.

Another thing she's learned? It's OK to not be good at being a celebrity. "I'm just not very good on TV, and it's not my main goal in life to get good at it," she admits. "People are like, 'She just can't handle' — for lack of a better word — 'the spotlight.' No, actually, I can't, and that is totally who I am." And Stewart has definitely learned how to handle her critics: "I stand by every mistake I've ever made, so judge away," she says.

Got the munchies? Leto will be supplying the Oscars snacks

Jared Leto says there's only one thing that gets him through the endless film awards season: A packed lunch. The 42-year-old has already won a Screen Actor's Guild Award and a Golden Globe for his performance as the transgendered Rayon in Dallas Buyers Club and he is nominated for an Academy Award. He says award shows "last for sometimes hours and hours and hours." Actors and directors "do red carpet in the afternoon and you end up leaving late in the evening. I like to eat really healthy, so I bring little snacks." At the Golden Globes, Leto says he got plenty of ribbing for his snacks but within minutes, "Reese Witherspoon, Jennifer Garner, Matthew (McConaughey), everyone is reaching into my bag!"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jared Leto ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Sarandon getting close with business partner

Susan Sarandon and her business partner Jonathan Bricklin, 36, have been rumoured to be enjoying a much more intimate partnership for some time, and now it seems Sarandon to be hinting that the rumours are true. "Jonathan and I collaborate on different things. That means a lot of things," she coyly tells AARP The Magazine in its latest issue. When asked by the magazine if those things include romance, Sarandon responds, "Yeah, I think so." Sarandon and Bricklin are co-investors in NYC ping pong bar Spin.

Chris Kattan

Former SNL star Kattan arrested on suspicion of drunken driving in L.A.

Authorities say former Saturday Night Live star Chris Kattan has been arrested on suspicion of drunken driving after his Mercedes struck a Department of Transportation vehicle on a Southern California freeway.

The California Highway Patrol says the Mercedes was seen weaving in and out of lanes shortly before 2 a.m. Monday on the 101 freeway in Los Angeles. The CHP says Kattan drove into a DOT vehicle that belonged to a crew conducting maintenance on a guardrail. No injuries are reported. The 43-year-old Kattan was jailed on suspicion of DUI.

Kattan, who was on SNL from 1996 to 2003, was best known for the character Mango. He also starred alongside Will Ferrell in the 1998 film A Night at the Roxbury. A call to Kattan's agent wasn't immediately returned.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Twitter

@rustyrockets
In Berlin tonight joking about Hitler.

@SteveCarell
So far this year I have had Olympic Fever, World Series Strep Throat, and Superbowl Diarrhea.

@BRUCKHEIMERJB
Had dinner with President Jimmy Carter last week. Great humanitarian and one of the nicest people I've ever met. Hope to share a pic soon.

Confidently leave the (home-workout) nest

Transition. Joining a gym for the first time can be intimidating, but it doesn't have to be

IZABELA SZYDLO
life@metronews.ca

Personal trainer Venessa Coda instructs Izabela Szydlo on how to do a wall sit. LIZBEDDALL.COM

I had convinced myself that I hated the gym before I ever set foot in one. The truth is, I was intimidated.

Instead, I started working out at home using dumbbells for resistance, a skipping rope for cardio and gym rat friends for advice. A year and 20 lost pounds later, I was ready to make the transition to a gym. But, despite having more fitness knowledge, I still felt apprehensive.

Venessa Coda, a Toronto-based personal trainer and licensed Zumba instructor with several martial arts under her belt, answered some of my concerns and put my gym fears to rest.

Should I be trying to burn fat and tone at the same time?
Fat burning and toning are two different things, but should be done together to get ultimate results. While you can target certain muscles to tone, you cannot target where you want to burn fat. To burn fat, you need to eat clean, and do cardiovascular and weight training. I would recommend a body fat test. It is a much better indicator of health than body mass index, which is simply a ratio of weight divided by height squared and does not take into account what our bodies are actually made of — specifically lean body mass like muscle, bone and water versus fat. Make sure you understand the instructions before taking one of these tests, as not doing so can result in an inaccurate reading.

What is the difference between machines and free weights?
The most important component in any strength training program is safety. If you are new to strength training or if you are working out alone, machines are your best bet. They provide a more controlled motion and isolate certain muscle groups. Free weights promote quicker strength gains and allow more variations in range of motion, but they require more balance and coordination. As a beginner, you should set up a fitness test and a gym walk-through with a professional who can show you how the machines work. Once you get more comfortable with the machines, slowly start to add a few free weight exercises. Eventually, you want to incorporate both machines and free weights into your routine.

Quoted

> "You want to create a lifestyle change that will last as long as you can stay active. Be consistent, eat clean and keep setting goals for yourself."
>
> Venessa Coda, personal trainer and licensed Zumba instructor

Some say that it is better to work out in the morning. Is there a specific time I should be hitting the gym?
Take into consideration what goes on in your day-to-day life and resolve to give yourself at least three hours a week in the gym. That equals three workouts a week. Then look at your days and see which days you tend to have a little more time. You have to be real with yourself and pick the time of day you know you will make it to the gym. Consistency is key if you want to see results. This is why it is super important to set a very realistic goal.

Is hiring a personal trainer a must?
Hiring a personal trainer is not a must but is a good idea if your budget allows it — even if it's just a few sessions to get you started on a program that is designed specifically for your needs and goals. Benefits to having a live trainer are: motivation, efficiency, improvement of technique and skills, and help with creating a fun workout. But remember, you are in control of your bank account. Do not be pressured into getting a trainer if you can't afford it. There are online resources that can help you through your workouts. Make sure you are using a reputable website, and paying close attention to instruction and watching technique closely.

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Kris Abel
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Shedding some light on the winter blues

A light therapy box may help to combat symptoms of seasonal affective disorder. ISTOCK

BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
Best Health Magazine

In the January/February issue of Best Health, writer Patricia Pearson tells of her personal experience with seasonal affective disorder (S.A.D.), and how she is able to combat it during the winter months.

Here are a few facts about S.A.D.

• S.A.D. became a recognized disorder in the early 1980s. In its mild form, it's sometimes called "the winter blues," but if your mood, appetite and sleep patterns are badly affected in winter, talk to your doctor.

• What exactly triggers S.A.D. remains unknown, but the conventional thinking is that it's related to diminished sunlight. Natural visible light, as opposed to electric light, may regulate the production of the brain chemicals considered crucial for good mood and high energy. Less daytime causes the depletion of serotonin and the overproduction of melatonin (which is the neurotransmitter that tells us to sleep), prompting some of us to just want to stay on the couch.

• Other factors may be genetic history, shorter days and the lack of exposure to green spaces and rural outdoor settings.

Solutions

• Research shows that a light-therapy box (about $200) can really help. They are specially designed to project blue long-wave light, which is thought to help boost mood and alertness.

• A study also showed that office workers with a view of nature liked their jobs more, enjoyed better health and reported greater life satisfaction, In other words, exposure to green spaces can help symptoms related to stress and depression, including those brought on by prolonged adverse weather and annual time changes.

• If you don't have a daily view of nature and can't escape to it, go for a daily, simple but brisk walk. Exercise helps you feel happier and gives you more energy, too.

To read about our writer's experiences fighting the winter blues, see the whole story in the latest issue of Best Health magazine.

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Goodbye grade school, hello globe!

Leaving the homeland and the homework?

Parents weigh in on the pros and cons of having children miss school for vacations

Heather Greenwood Davis has few qualms about pulling her children out of school for short-term trips — a practice she plans to continue in future.

In fact, the Toronto-based travel writer is such a firm believer in the benefits of learning beyond the classroom that in 2011, she took a year-long globe-trotting journey with her husband and sons (then aged six and eight).

Greenwood Davis documented their adventures — which spanned six continents and 29 countries — on her website, Globetrotting Mama. Her column Postcards from the Planet, which included photos from her travels and updates on her whereabouts, appeared weekly in Metro in 2012.

"I know the value that travel has brought to my life, even as an adult, and how many times I've been places where I've wished: 'Gosh, if I had seen this when they were trying to teach me out of the geography book or history book, it really would have sat with me better,'" she said in a recent interview.

Clockwise from top left, Heather Greenwood Davis, her husband Ish Davis and sons Cameron and Ethan pose for a photo in Versailles, France in May 2012. HEATHER GREENWOOD DAVIS/GLOBETROTTINGMAMA.COM /THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Outside of strict educational channels, too, we talk about socializing kids, instilling confidence and all of those sorts of things — and travel offers all of that."

As a travel adviser, Sheila Gallant-Halloran said her busiest periods at work are when her clients are on vacation, such as March Break and the summer. That's one of the reasons the mother of two daughters, aged eight and 14, has previously allowed them to miss school to help accommodate the occasional family vacation, like a fall trip to Walt Disney World or an extended break for travel around Easter.

"Work commitment is the biggest thing for me. But certainly there are price considerations," said Gallant-Halloran, Ottawa-based luxury travel adviser with Vision Travel/Lush Life.

"I have a lot of teacher clients, for example, they can only go on (vacation during) March Break ... it is very difficult for them to take off other times. As a result, they're going for when the majority of people are trying to travel with their children, so they're paying higher costs for flights....

"If you're stuck and you have to travel at that time, you have to actually book far in advance to get the best pricing. And if you don't have that liberty, then you're stuck."

Having children miss several days, a week or more from school for non-essential travel may prove appealing to parents looking to squeeze in family getaways within busy work schedules or seeking to save with last-minute deals. But a British couple with three children recently paid a high price when their kids missed class.

Natasha and Stewart Sutherland had booked a week-long fall trip to Greece a year in advance. Previously, the Department of Education allowed teachers to grant leaves of absence for family holidays during the school term in "special circumstances" of up to 10 school days per year.

But amendments enacted last September removed references to family holiday and extended leave, as well the "statutory threshold" of 10 school days.

The Sutherlands were forced to pay more than more than $1,800 in costs and fines. Meanwhile, an online petition seeking a reversal of the amended rules has gathered more than 200,000 signatures.

Representatives for public school boards in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver told The Canadian Press that cases are addressed on an individual basis, and the decision on whether kids will miss class ultimately rests with the parents, provided they obtain proper clearances from school officials.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

We're leaving on a jetplane

Greenwood Davis emphasizes the importance of providing ample notice about a potential trip to find out what may be covered during that period and to determine if it's a good time for the child to be away.

- "You might change your mind once you hear that they're studying something you know your child's struggling with. So I think that notice is really important," said Greenwood Davis, whose sons are now nine and 11.

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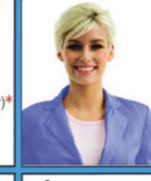

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V-Day gifts with a little give

Love with a small twist. A business and one-day bash help add a bit of variety to your typical Valentine's Day

TAKARA SMALL
Metro News in Toronto
@takarasmall

A woman models a handcrafted necklace from India in this photo for Unikati & Co. CONTRIBUTED

Who: Unikati & Co.

What: Ethical small business that sells handmade accessories from across the world

Where: Unikati.ca

Why: "We have faith in the impact it can have, because a lot of the woman are living in rural areas where poverty tends to be highest," says Leila Handanovic, co-founder of Unikati & Co.

It's called Saint Valentin in French, known as Día de San Valentín in Spanish or simply Valentine's Day to most people in Canada.

As always, marketers are keen to promote the unofficial "day of love" to the point of absurdity.

This year, however, it seems that Cupid will get a light reprieve, as businesses are working hard to turn the conventions of Valentine's Day on their head.

E-laborate

- Go to metronews.ca/mom-and-pop-shops to check out more jewelry and gifts up for grabs this year for Valentine's Day.

Enter Dina Bajric and Leila Handanovic, co-founders of Unikati & Co. The store sells fair trade and ethical handcrafted goods. Everything from earrings from Bosnia to saffron wool scarves from Rwanda and brass bracelets from Cambodia can be purchased from their online store at unikati.ca.

This year, Barjric and Handanovic want consumers to buy presents or gifts for their significant others that can make a difference in the world.

"We wanted the people who buy our stuff ... (to) like it twice as much, not just because it looks good but because it paid the workers a wage," says Handanovic.

Sean Snyder also wants to switch up this celebration of all things amour. Instead of focusing on the relationship side of life and catering to others, he planned and created Galentine's Day, an online event happening Feb. 13 that allows women across Canada to spend the day with special savings even if they don't have a special someone.

"It's really hanging out with your gals; having fun, talking, pampering yourselves doing a little shopping — whatever you love doing most with your girls. We created galentinesday.ca as a way to help inspire women to do all that and more," he says.

The event has teamed with a number of Canadian retailers to offer discounts on items you'll be happy to give your heart to.

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Make all your dates sweeter

Sweet Week. Metro is getting in the mood with a different V-Day treat every day — and this one happens to be healthy, too

THERESA ALBERT
myfriendinfood.com

I had the distinct pleasure of going to Bard Valley, Ariz., where Medjool dates are grown. I went 50 feet up a palm tree, picked one off the cluster and ate it. Pretty cool experience.

Medjool dates are dried right on the tree; no further treating or drying is required. They are wrapped in burlap to control pests rather than sprayed so they are effectively "organic" without the label.

Ingredients

- 12 Natural Delights Medjool Dates, pitted
- 12 pecan halves
- 5 oz (150 g) dark chocolate (70%), chopped
- 2.5 oz (75 mL) white chocolate, chopped

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

1. Using a small paring knife, cut a slit into each Medjool date and remove the pit. Gently squeeze a date open and stuff the pecan half inside. Repeat with remaining pecan halves and Medjool dates.

2. Using a double boiler, gently melt the chocolate and remove from heat once it's melted. Be sure to keep any moisture, water or even steam away from the chocolate.

3. Using a fork, dredge the stuffed dates through the dark chocolate and place onto a wire cooling-rack. Let cool.

4. Place melted white chocolate into piping bag. Drizzle chocolate decoratively back and forth over chocolate dipped date. Let cool completely before serving. THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM/RECIPE FROM NATURALDELIGHTS.CA

This recipe produces 12 Medjool Date Pecan Chocolate Truffles. COURTESY NATURALDELIGHTS.CA

Health Solutions

Replace those crappy gooey chocolates

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Even your friendly neighbourhood nutritionist craves chocolate for Valentine's Day!

I can't and won't eat crappy sugar-filled creamy chocolates — only exquisite dark, antioxidant-filled cocoa will do. But sometimes chewing on a chunk of chocolate isn't all that satisfying and some kind of filling is required. Luckily, there is a simple, healthy solution for my high maintenance sweet style — surround something superb with dark chocolate!

Medjool dates are a shelf stable fresh fruit that is high in nutrients and super sweet, so you only need two to satisfy any craving.

These chewy little treats are packed with potassium and fibre but are miraculously low on the glycemic index, given how sweet they taste.

The uptake of sugar within your body is slowed by fibre, nutrients and fat and that matters to everyone, not just those with diabetes. Keeping the blood sugar even keeps a steady flow of glucose to the brain and an even call of insulin from the pancreas, thereby forestalling two syndromes that are rife in North America: metabolic syndrome in both the brain and the body.

Dipping Medjools in melted dark chocolate couldn't be easier. And the best way to win a healthy heart, yours or your lover's, is to care for it every day — including Valentine's.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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RRSP GUIDE

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

An RRSP allows you to save money for retirement on a tax deferred basis. By investing in an RRSP, people can also reduce the amount of tax payable on income the year they contribute. ANDRESR/SHUTTERSTOCK

How to navigate your savings vehicle

YLVA VAN BUUREN
For Metro

When you get to the real intent of a registered retirement savings plan (RRSP), it really has application for everyone, says Anthony Williams, vice-president of academic affairs with The Canadian Institute of Financial Planning.

The RRSP is a savings vehicle, first and foremost. It allows you to save money for retirement on a tax deferred basis. By investing in an RRSP, people can also reduce the amount of tax payable on income the year they contribute.

Here's what tax planners recommend for specific groups in the population.

Younger Canadians

Students today should be saving for retirement, says Dean Owen, a Saskatoon financial adviser with Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada.

There are fewer and fewer generous pension plans and it's critical to look at RRSPs.

"Especially with the 40-and-under age group, they're not sticking to a job long enough to have a company pension plan anyway."

Can investing in an RRSP reduce your taxable income?

- Tax rates are based on percentage of income. For example, in federal taxes, Canadians pay 15 per cent on $44,000, 22 per cent on $44,000 to $88,000, 26 per cent on $88,000 to $136,000, and 29 per cent on more than that. Provincial tax is added on top of that. Someone making $45,000 will pay 22 per cent federal tax while someone making $41,000 will pay 15 per cent.

Self-employed

If a self-employed person is making more than $40,000, Owen said, they should be looking at RRSPs so they pay less tax as they build their retirement nest egg. If they make less than $40,000, a deduction is not going to help significantly.

Pension plan holders

There are investment options with a personal RRSP that you wouldn't have with a company pension plan. Also, a personal RRSP provides more flexibility — if there is an emergency, funds are available.

Special cases

Sometimes RRSP money can be used long before retirement. If someone is going to be off work for a year (doing a master's degree, for example), pulling money out will trigger a tax liability, but tax will be minimized because they are in a low income bracket (they aren't working).

Saving even a small amount each year can help you build a nest egg for your future. MIRCO VACCA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Strategy. Start planning for your future

Age is a key consideration with an investment strategy, especially when it comes to how much, and when, a younger investor should contribute to a registered retirement savings plan.

"We believe that it's never too early to start investing in your future," said Dennis Tew, chief financial officer at Franklin Templeton Investments Corp.

"Sometimes there's a tendency to wait and forgo contributing when we're young due to other priorities — families, mortgages, weddings — but, in fact, it should always be a priority. Even a small amount each year can make a difference over a lifetime."

For the young investor looking to make their first RRSP contribution this year, Tew offers these tips to help make the decision a smart one.

1 Understand risk tolerance. To put it simply, do you prefer growing your RRSP savings steadily over time (lower to medium risk) or are you OK with the possibility of more investment volatility in the pursuit of larger gains (higher risk)?

2 Diversify across asset classes. Make sure you understand the basics about the main asset classes in which you can invest — bonds don't necessarily mean safe and equities don't necessarily mean risky. Why not diversify your investments?

3 Speak with an adviser. Investment advisers have their fingers on the pulse of markets and can help you map out a plan for achieving your retirement goals. They can provide insights that are in line with your personal risk tolerance and investment goals. NEWS CANADA

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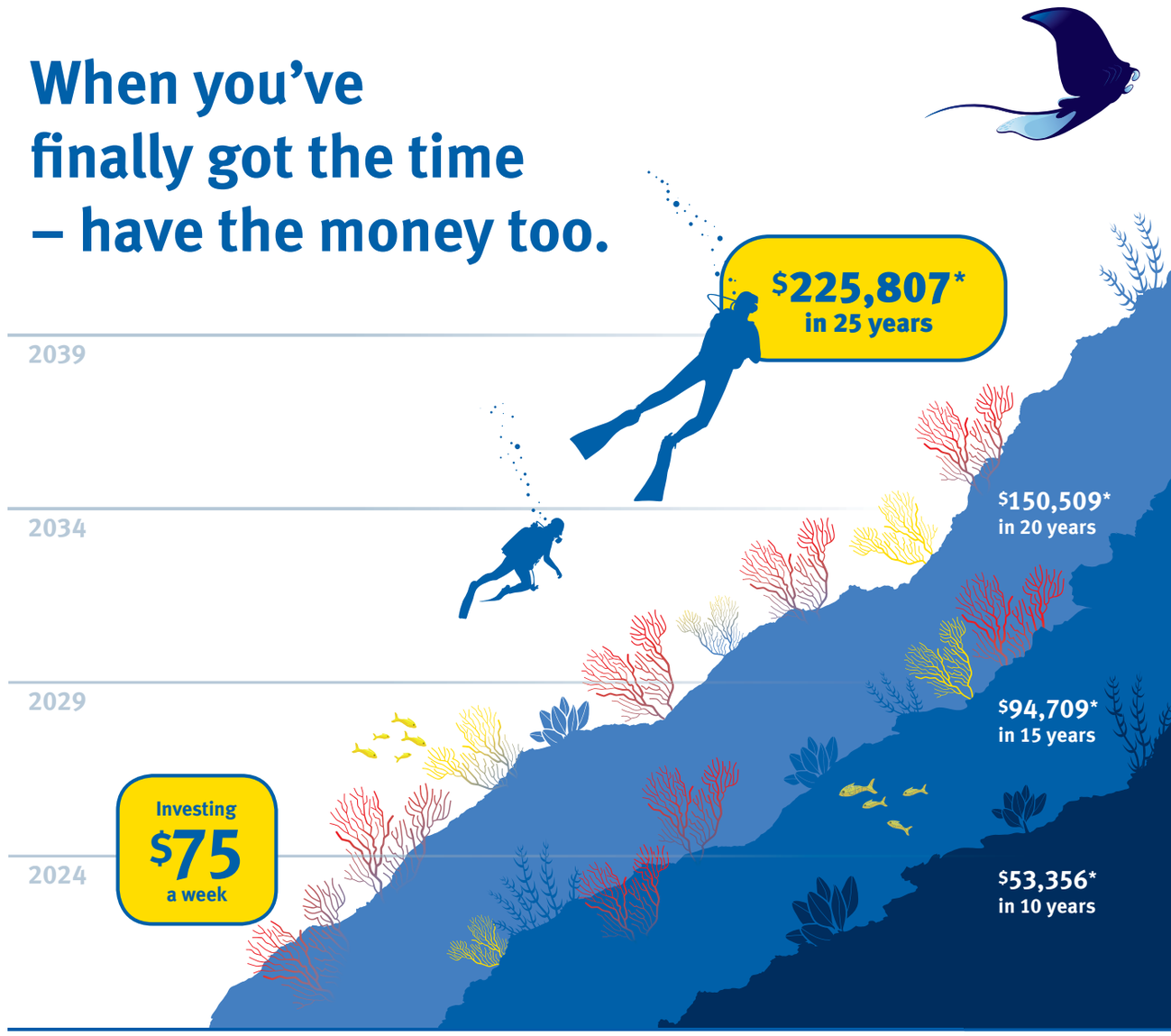

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Plan to use unused contributions

TALBOT BOGGS
Smart Investing

Do an analysis of your retirement — what do you want to do in your retirement and how much will you need to maintain that lifestyle? ANDREY_POPOV/SHUTTERSTOCK

The government set up registered retirement savings plans in 1957 as a vehicle for Canadians to save for their retirement. But more than five decades later, data shows they have not used it to their fullest and Canadians are now sitting on some $600 billion in unused contributions.

"A lot of people just don't have the income to be able to contribute to the maximum," said Johnathan Rivard, an investment adviser with Edward Jones. "They have a lot of other priorities like a mortgage, children's education, cars, entertainment and travel. With everything else they have to do it's just not that high a priority."

How can Canadians catch up on their RRSP under-contributions and help ensure they have enough money tucked away for retirement?

"Budgeting is key," Rivard said. "Do an analysis of your retirement — what do you want to do in your retirement, how much will you need to maintain that lifestyle and then how are you going to fund it? It's important to understand why you are contributing."

One financial question that seems to come up continually in financial planning is whether it is better to pay down your mortgage or contribute to your RRSP.

Unfortunately, there's no easy answer. A lot will depend on individual circumstances such as lifestyle, debt level and interest rates, but there are some things to consider.

"A lot of people believe real estate is one of the best long-term investments you can make," Rivard said. "There are a lot of costs associated with real estate like taxes and repairs and maintenance that can really add up over time. Investments, however, tend to be more passive when it comes to costs although fees sometimes can be a discouragement as well.

"So it's really important to get some professional financial advice for the best solution for you based on your personal situation."

RRSP contributions also tend to be impacted by the economy and performance of financial markets.

"When the markets do well we tend to see better RRSP seasons," Rivard said. "A lot is driven by emotion. When people feel good they are more inclined to invest, but during the recession of 2008-09 investment was down. It's pretty cyclical."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TALBOT BOGGS IS A TORONTO-BASED BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS WORKED WITH NATIONAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS, MAGAZINES AND CORPORATIONS IN THE FINANCE, RETAIL, MANUFACTURING AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL SECTORS.

TFSAs offer versatility

YLVA VAN BUUREN
For Metro

Contribution amount

- You can contribute up to $5,500 per year into a TFSA plus any unused contribution room from previous years.

Since it was introduced in 2009, the tax-free savings account (TFSA) has changed the complexion of financial planning, says Anthony Williams, vice-president of academic affairs with The Canadian Institute of Financial Planning.

"You can use it for any purpose ... short term, long term, rainy day fund, a special purchase, a 25th anniversary, and for retirement — with tax-free growth. And the money can be pulled out at any time at no taxable cost."

Here are some ways to use a TFSA.

• Pension plan plus: Anyone with a good pension can use a TFSA. "You don't get a tax deduction (like you do with an RRSP contribution) but where an RRSP will hurt is when you start to take it out," said Dean Owen, a Saskatoon financial adviser with Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada. "RRSP money may push you into a higher tax bracket." TFSA funds are not taxable.

• Windfall: If you receive a windfall of some kind and tax payable is zero, putting it into an RRSP is not going to provide a significant income tax break and you will pay tax later. If you don't have a TFSA, open one. You can carry forward unused contributions this year, $31,000 total since 2009.

• Retirement savings: When a marginal tax rate is not high ($40,000 or less), the deduction from an RRSP contribution will not affect tax rate significantly. But a TFSA allows for tax-free growth.

• Emergencies: Using a TFSA as an emergency fund is absolutely a good idea, Owen said. The money is accessible and can still make money with no penalty or tax if you decide to withdraw it.

• Investments: The TFSA is functional for conservative and speculative investments. "If you earn $100 in interest, you would normally have to pay tax on that," Williams said.

"But in a TFSA, there are no tax implications. If you get lucky and your investment goes from $5,000 to $25,000, you still don't pay tax on the growth. Pull the money out of TFSA and contribution space would be restored in the next year."

If you receive a windfall of some kind you might want to consider placing that money into a tax-free savings account. SYDA PRODUCTIONS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Protect savings from life's surprises

If you are like most Canadians, your registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) will be your main source of retirement income.

But what would happen if you had to stop contributing to your RRSP or dip into those investments to pay for an injury or illness that prevented you from earning an income?

"Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans, but if you don't protect your income you could be risking your financial well-being," said Heather Clarke, certified financial planner at Investors Group.

"Having the right insurance in place can help you make sure your retirement savings stay on track."

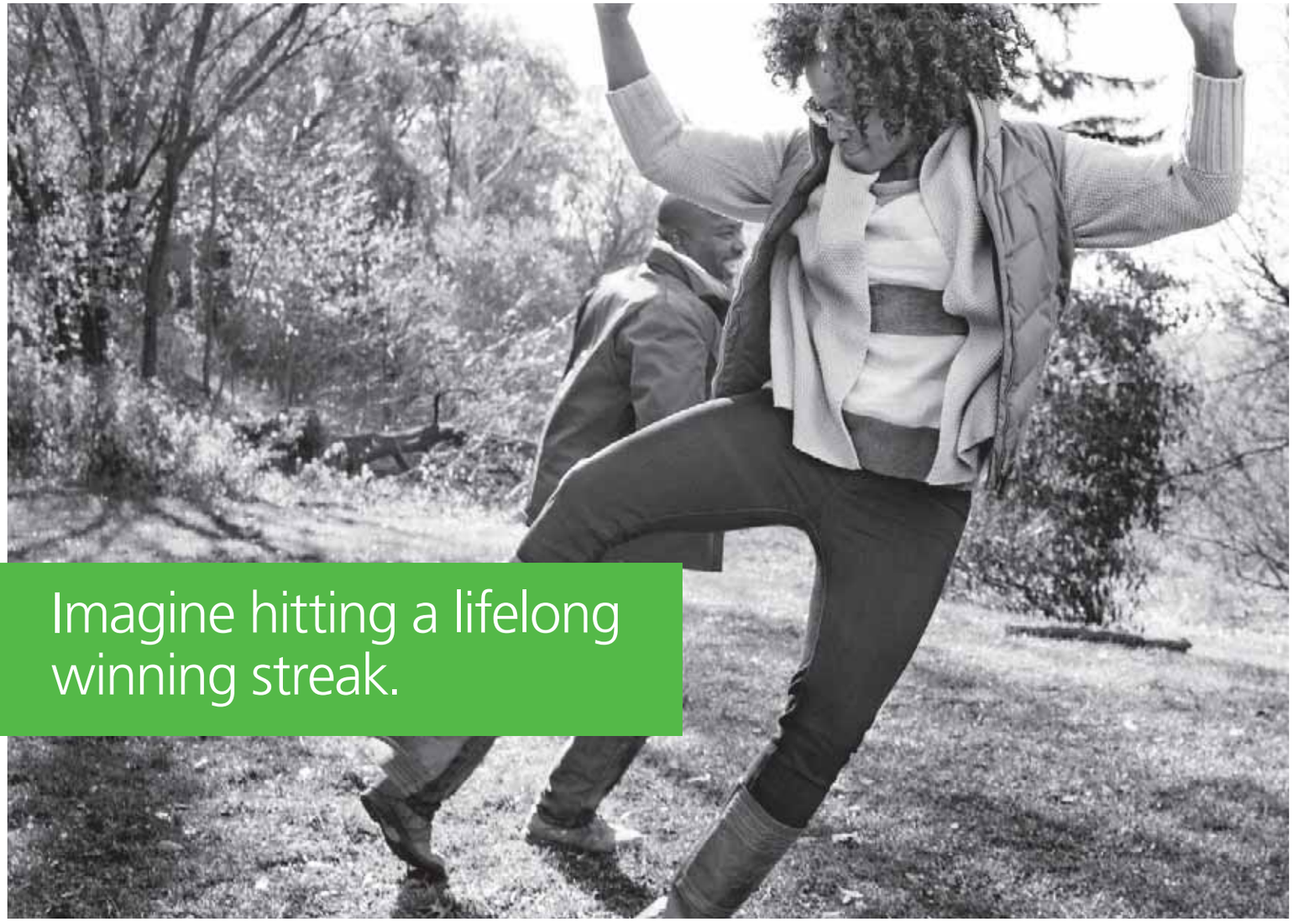
Here are three reasons to consider disability, critical illness or long-term care insurance.

• It could happen. According to actuarial statistics, the average Canadian has a one-in-three chance of becoming disabled for 90 days or longer, at least once before the age of 65. The average length of a disability longer than 90 days is almost three years.

• Stopping your RRSP contributions can hurt your retirement savings. For example, at 25 you start making RRSP contributions of $300 per month, but become permanently disabled at age 35 and are unable to contribute to your RRSP. By 65, your nest egg will be worth $400,000 less than it would have been if you had continued to make contributions until retirement (assuming an eight per cent compound annual rate of return).

• You may have less income, but greater expenses. If you become disabled, depending on the nature of your disability you may have ongoing medical expenses that increase your overall cost of living.

NEWS CANADA



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Canada's Alex Bilodeau, gold medallist, and silver medallist Mikael Kingsbury celebrate their men's moguls wins with bronze medallist Alexandr Smyshlyaev of Russia at the Sochi Olympics, Monday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canucks repeat one-two punch

Freestyle skiing.
Bilodeau defends gold, Kingsbury earns silver to match Montreal sisters' moguls feat

Alex Bilodeau is back atop the Olympic podium and he says he has his teammates to thank for it.

The freestyle skier from Rosemere, Que., defended his gold medal in men's moguls at the Sochi Olympics on Monday, edging his teammates Mikael Kingsbury of Deux-Montagnes, Que., who took silver, and Marc-Antoine Gagnon of Terrebonne, Que., who finished fourth.

Bilodeau, Canada's first gold medallist four years ago in Vancouver, had a flawless final run to earn a score of 26.31.

"It's a great feeling, but I need to first of all thank all my colleagues," Bilodeau said. "I was the third to go; there were two other Canadians after me. Every day they push me in training and that's why I got my best skiing tonight. That's why I'm the best skier I have ever been right now and the guy that finished second, he is going to win everything after I have gone."

Bilodeau, who is the first moguls skier to defend an Olympic title, received a long celebratory hug from his brother Frederic right after his victory. Bilodeau says Frederic, who has cerebral palsy, is his hero and he dedicated his gold medal in Vancouver to him.

"It was amazing. My brother is my everyday inspiration," he said. "Like I say all the time, if he had the life that I have lived he would be a three-time Olympic champion."

Kingsbury, who has been Bilodeau's main rival on the World Cup circuit this season, had a small stumble in his final run to finish with 24.71.

Russia's Alexandr Smyshlyaev was third with 24.34.

It's the second 1-2 finish for the Canadian moguls team at these Games after Montreal sisters Justine and Chloe Dufour-Lapointe won gold and silver in the women's competition on Saturday night. Bilodeau is happy with where the program is going.

"I'm glad to finish my last Olympics like this," he said. "It's going to be a great retirement."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

On the cusp

Marc-Antoine Gagnon didn't have any hard feelings after being nudged off the moguls podium by a teammate.

- Gagnon, from Terrebonne, Que., finished fourth at the Sochi Games on Monday with a score of 23.35.
- He was in third before Mikael Kingsbury of Deux-Montagnes, Que., made a silver-medal-winning run.
- "I'm pretty happy I finished fourth, this is my first Games," said the 22-year-old.

Planting a legacy

"The future of freestyle skiing in Canada is not done, there are so many good kids coming up and I am so glad to share a podium with one of them."

Alex Bilodeau, on teammate Mikael Kingsbury.

Alpine skiing

Gagnon hopes to fight through pain

Canada's Marie-Michele Gagnon is hoping to continue competing at the Sochi Olympics, despite dislocating her shoulder in a fall during the slalom run of the women's super combined race Monday.

The skier from Lac-Etchemin, Que., hit a gate and lost control of her skis before crashing into the snow.

"We will have to see how it goes but I'm hoping to keep racing here in Sochi," Gagnon said in a release. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Speedskating

Dutch continue orange crush

An orange wave rolled around Adler Arena once again as the Dutch continued their domination in Olympic long-track speedskating.

After opening the competition with a sweep of the men's 5,000 metres Saturday, the Netherlands did it again Monday by finishing 1-2-3 in the men's 500. In between Irene Wust won another gold Sunday in the women's 3,000.

On Monday it was Double Dutch and then some as 27-year-old twins Michel and Ronald Mulder won gold and bronze and countryman Jan Smeekens took silver.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dutch gold medallist Michel Mulder GETTY IMAGES

Luge

Canadians fall behind Germans

Germany's Natalie Geisenberger closed in on what appears to be an inevitable Olympic gold medal Monday, finishing the first two runs of the women's luge competition in one minute 39.814 seconds. That's 0.766 seconds better than her countrywoman Tatjana Huefner, who took the title at the Vancouver Games. Canadian lugers were also in the mix, with Alex Gough in fifth and fellow Calgarian Kimberley McRae in sixth. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hamelin on track for more gold

Canada's Charles Hamelin celebrates winning the men's 1,500-metre short-track speedskating final on Monday in Sochi, Russia. VADIM GHIRDA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Speedskating. The 'Locomotive' chugs to fourth career Olympic medal but expected to return to the podium

Charles Hamelin is a man on a mission.

In what could be the first of several trips to the podium, the star short-track speedskater won a gold medal in the men's 1,500 metres at the Sochi Olympics on Monday.

The native of Ste-Julie, Que., is a medal favourite in his three other events.

"I'm going through the full range of emotions," Hamelin, 29, said after finishing in two minutes 14.985 seconds to edge out Han Tianyu of China. "Of course I want to get back on the podium. But short-track speedskating is not an easy sport."

Hamelin won gold in the 500 metres and the 5,000-metre relay at the 2010 Games in Vancouver, but was seventh in the 1,500.

Going around in ovals

While François Hamelin, Charles' brother, and Michael Gilday of Yellowknife didn't advance to the final, Canada's women speedskaters had a better day

- **Qualifying.** In the women's 500 preliminaries, Marianne St-Gelais, Jessica Hewitt and Valerie Maltais advanced from heats. The same three, along with Marie-Eve Drolet, advanced in the 3,000-metre relay.

Hamelin, nicknamed "The Locomotive of Sainte-Julie," was virtually unbeatable on the World Cup circuit this season, winning six events.

Viktor Ahn earned the bronze Monday, giving Russia its first-ever short-track medal. J.R. Celski, the 2010 bronze medallist from Federal Way, Wash., finished fourth.

"He (Hamelin) deserves it," Celski said. "He went out there and raced his (rear) off."

As Hamelin entered the final lap in the lead, his girlfriend and teammate Marianne St-Gelais couldn't control her excitement, racing from her seat to the sidelines to give him a congratulatory hug.

With the silver medal he won in the relay event in Turin in 2006, Hamelin now has four Olympic medals. That leaves him one short of former teammates Marc Gagnon and François-Louis Tremblay.

He is also tied with Gagnon for the most gold medals for a Canadian short-track speedskater. If he wins medals in his three remaining events he will become Canada's most decorated Olympian behind long-track speedskater Cindy Klassen and speedskater/cyclist Clara Hughes, who both have six.

He will have chances to win individual gold in the 500 and 1,000 metres and he'll be part of Canada's team in the 5,000 relay. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Curling

Jacobs' rink upset by Switzerland

Canada made a stuttering start to the defence of its men's Olympic curling title on Monday, following up a scrappy win over unheralded Germany with a surprise loss to Switzerland on a sobering day for the big gold-medal favourites.

By the end of opening day, Sweden was the only team 2-for-2, with wins in tough matches against the Swiss and Britain.

After becoming the first team in Canada's storied curling history to go through Olympic trials unbeaten, Brad Jacobs' rink was widely seen as the overwhelming favourites for the games.

But Canada was sloppy in beating Germany — arguably the weakest lineup in the 10-team competition — 11-8 in the morning and then was upset 5-4 by Switzerland in the evening.

It doesn't get any easier for the Jacobs and his rink from Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., — their only match on Tuesday is against Sweden in a repeat of the 2013 world championship final. The Swedes won that in Victoria in April.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Curling. Jones, Canada overcome Russia's roar

They stomped their feet and clapped their hands, and hollered all game long.

But Jennifer Jones and her steely-nerved Canadian teammates played like they couldn't hear them at all.

Amid the din of a deafening Russian crowd that never let up, the Winnipeg skip led Team Canada to a 9-2 victory over China in their opening game of the Sochi Olympics on Monday.

It was both a strong start against a tough opponent for the Canadians, and a great dress-rehearsal for when they eventually play Russia later in the Games.

"You can't really hear very well, but we'll come up with some solutions to that," said Jones, who has hand signals worked out — a hand up means stop sweeping — for when the din of the crowd threatens to drown out her directions.

The curlers struggled to be heard, but it helped that the Canadians were prepared for the crazy atmosphere.

"I don't know that they're a curling-knowledgeable crowd, and I think we saw that in Vancouver (at the Olympics) as well, so it's not really a big surprise," said Canada's second Jill Officer.

Jones and her team built a 3-0 advantage and then opened the gap by drawing for three in the fifth end to give Canada a 6-1 lead. Canada drew for three more before Bingyu Wang conceded in the seventh end.

Canada's skip Jennifer Jones yells after throwing her rock in Monday's third end against China. NATHAN DENNETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"We're pretty proud of that start," Jones said. "It's our first Olympics and we came out and played really well from the first end on against a great team."

The Canadians, who next face Sweden on Tuesday afternoon, had been expecting a tough test against the Canadian-coached Chinese team, the 2009 world champion and 2010 Olympic bronze medallist.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MEDALS

Nation	G	S	B	Tot.
Canada	**3**	**3**	**1**	**7**
Netherlands	3	2	2	7
Norway	2	1	4	7
Russian Federation	1	2	3	6
United States of America	2	0	3	5

WHAT CANADA DID

MONDAY

ALPINE SKIING

Women's Super Combined Downhill - Marie-Michele Gagnon, Lac-Etchemin, Que., 21st (one minute, 45.39 seconds)

Women's Super Combined Slalom - Marie-Michele Gagnon, Lac-Etchemin, Que., DNF.

BIATHLON

Men's 12.5 km Pursuit - Nathan Smith, Calgary, 11th (34 minutes, 37.7 seconds, +49.1 seconds); Jean-Philippe Le Guellec, Shannon, Que., 26th (35:45.3); Brendan Green, Hay River, N.W.T., 35th, (36:21.2)

CURLING

Men's Round Robin Session 1 - Canada 11 Germany 8

Men's Round Robin Session 2 - Switzerland 5 Canada 4

Women's Round Robin Session 1 - Canada 9 China 2

FREESTYLESKIING

Men's Moguls Qualification 1 - x-Alex Bilodeau, Montreal, 1st (24.70 points); x-Mikael Kingsbury, Deux-Montagnes, Que., 2nd (23.81); x-Marc-Antoine Gagnon, Terrebonne, Que., 5th (22.90); x-Philippe Marquis, Quebec City, 6th (22.43).
x- qualified for Final 1

Men's Moguls Final 1 - x-Philippe Marquis, Quebec City, 2nd (24.32); x-Mikael Kingsbury, Deux-Montagnes, Que., 3rd (24.31); x-Marc-Antoine Gagnon, Terrebonne, Que., 4th (23.45); x-Alex Bilodeau, Montreal, 8th (22.49).
x- qualified for Final 2

Men's Moguls Final 2 - x-Mikael Kingsbury, Deux-Montagnes, Que., 1st (24.54); x-Marc-Antoine Gagnon, Terrebonne, Que., 2nd (24.16); x-Alex Bilodeau, Montreal, 3rd (23.89); Philippe Marquis, Quebec City, 9th (22.25).
x-qualified for Final 3

Men's Moguls Final 3 - Alex Bilodeau, Montreal, **1st, Gold Medal** (26.31); Mikael Kingsbury, Deux-Montagnes, Que., **2nd, Silver Medal** (24.71); Marc-Antoine Gagnon, Terrebonne, Que., 4th (23.35).

ICE HOCKEY

Women's Prelimary Round (Group A) - Canada 3 Finland 0

LUGE

Women's Singles Run 1of 4 - Alex Gough, Calgary, 5th (50.464 seconds); Kimberley McRae, Calgary, 6th (50.465); Arianne Jones, Calgary, 13th (50.993)

Women's Singles Run 2 of 4 - Alex Gough, Calgary, 5th (50.402 seconds); Kimberley McRae, Calgary, 6th (50.454); Arianne Jones, Calgary, 15th (50.837)

Overall Ranking- Alex Gough, Calgary, 5th (one minute 40.866 seconds, +1.052 seconds); Kimberley McRae, Calgary, T-6th (1:40.919); Arianne Jones, Calgary, 13th (1:41.830)
Runs 3 and 4 on Feb. 11

SHORT TRACK

Men's 1500 m Heats - Race 4: x-Charles Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 1st (two minutes 16.903 seconds); **Race 5:** x-Francois Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 2nd (2:13.935); **Race 6:** x-Michael Gilday, Yellowknife, N.W.T., 1st (2:16.468)
x- qualified for semifinals

Men's 1500 m Semifinals - Race 15: x-Francois Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 4th (two minutes 16.473 seconds); **Race 16:** Michael Gilday, Yellowknife, N.W.T., Penalty; **Race 17:** y-Charles Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 1st (2:14.480).
y- qualified for Final A; x- qualified for Final B

Men's 1500 m Finals - Final A: Charles Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 1st (2:14.985); **Final B:** Francois Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 2nd (2:21.592)

Men's 1500m Final Ranking: Charles Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., **1st,Gold Medal**; Francois Hamelin, Sainte-Julie, Que., 9th; Michael Gilday, Yellowknife, N.W.T., 17th.

Ladies' 500 m Heats - Race 11: x-Marianne St-Gelais, St-Felicien, Que., 1st (43.729 seconds); **Race 13:** x-Jessica Hewitt, Kamloops, B.C., 2nd (43.447); **Race: 14:** x-Valerie Maltais, La Baie, Que., 1st (44.093).
x- qualified for the quarter-finals on Feb. 13

Ladies' 3000 m Relay Semifinals - x-Canada (Marie-Eve Drolet, Chicoutimi, Que.; Jessica Hewitt, Kamloops, B.C.; Valerie Maltais, La Baie, Que.; Marianne St-Gelais, St-Felicien, Que.), 2nd, (four minutes 8.871 seconds).
x- qualified for Final A on Feb. 18

SPEED SKATING

Men's 500 m Race 1 of 2 - Gilmore Junio, Calgary, 11th (35.15 seconds); Jamie Gregg, Edmonton, (35.17); William Dutton, Humboldt, Sask., T-18th (35.278); Muncef Ouardi, Quebec City, 23rd (35.395)

Men's 500 m Race 2 of 2 - Gilmore Junio, Calgary, 7th (35.09 seconds); Jamie Gregg, Edmonton, 8th (35.10); William Dutton, Humboldt, Sask., 11th (35.17); Muncef Ouardi, Quebec City, 29th, (35.60).

Men's 500 m Final Ranking: Gilmore Junio, Calgary, 10th (70.25 seconds, +0.94 of a second); Jamie Gregg, Edmonton, 11th (70.27); William Dutton, Humboldt, Sask., 14th (70.448); Muncef Ouardi, Quebec City, 25th (70.997).

CURLING

MEN

Monday's results
Britain 7 Russia 4
Sweden 7 Switzerland 5
China 7 Denmark 4
Canada 11 Germany 8
Norway 7 United States 4
Denmark 11 Russia 10
Switzerland 5 **Canada 4**
Sweden 8 Britain 4

Tuesday's games
Canada vs. Sweden, 5 a.m.
United States vs. China, 5 a.m.
Britain vs. Germany, 5 a.m.
Norway vs. Russia, 5 a.m.

WOMEN

Monday's results
Canada 9 China 2
Switzerland 7, United States 4
Sweden 6, Britain 4
Russia 7, Denmark 4

Tuesday, Feb. 11
Switzerland vs. Denmark, 12 a.m.
Sweden vs. **Canada**, 12 a.m.
Russia vs. United States, 12 a.m.
South Korea vs. Japan, 12 a.m.
Britain vs. United States, 10 a.m.
South Korea vs Switzerland, 10 a.m.
Denmark vs Japan, 10 a.m.
China vs. Russia, 10 a.m.

HOCKEY

PRELIMINARY ROUND

MEN

Wednesday's games
Czech Republic at Sweden, 12 p.m.
Latvia at Switzerland, 12 p.m.

WOMEN

Monday's results
United States 9 Switzerland 0
Canada 3 Finland 0

Tuesday's games
Germany at Sweden, 5 a.m.
Russia at Japan, 10 a.m.

Women's hockey.
Patience guides Canada past Finland's star goalie

The story of Canada's first win in the Olympic women's hockey tournament was the shot-out-of-a-cannon enthusiasm of its rookies. The patience and perseverance of the veterans was the tale of the second.

They'd seen Noora Raty's act before. Finland's goaltender mows down a ton of rubber and can single-handedly keep her country in games against Canada and the United States.

Monday's game was scoreless deep into the third period and there was the whiff of an upset in the air.

But three-time Olympian Megan Agosta-Marciano broke the tension with a power-play goal at 9:27. Jayna Hefford, playing in her fifth Winter Games, quickly added another and Rebecca Johnston sealed the 3-0 win within a seven-minute span.

"I don't think anyone was nervous," Agosta-Marciano said. "We knew what we were doing.

"As the periods go on, she gets more confidence. We knew we needed to be patient and we needed to keep coming. Once we got that one, we got three."

Shannon Szabados earned a 14-save shutout, while Raty stopped 39 of 42 shots in front of an announced 4,837 at Shayba Arena.

Canada and the United States, both 2-0, secured berths to the semifinals Monday. Under a new tournament format, the countries ranked in the top four in the world are in one pool and fifth through eight in the other.

Canada and the U.S. finish the round-robin against each other Wednesday in what could be a preview of the gold-medal game.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

1-on-6

The U.S. women's hockey team trounced Switzerland on Monday by the score 9-0.

- Amanda Kessel put an exclamation point on the win with a highlight-reel goal in which she received the puck from a centre-ice faceoff, skated over the blue-line, passed the puck to herself off the boards, circled back in front of the net and stick-handled around the Swiss goalie for the score.

Natalie Spooner of Canada shoots the puck wide of the net against Finland goalie Noora Raty on Monday in Sochi, Russia. MATT SLOCUM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Snowboarding

Olympic halfpipe course criticized

Rider after rider took a crash course Monday night on an Olympic halfpipe that looked only half ready with less than 24 hours until the start of the men's competition.

There were dozens of falls, very few big tricks and a lot of complaining during a practice session that was pushed from morning to night while workers tried to make fixes. The men's event is Tuesday, and American Shaun White will be seeking his third straight gold medal.

"When you see every other person fall, you know something's wrong," said American Hannah Teter, who took gold in 2006 and silver four years ago. "It's a little dangerous. I've seen more people fall today than I saw all season. It's dangerous because it's crappy."

American Danny Davis labelled the halfpipe as "garbage" on Sunday. After returning Monday, he said things were slightly improved but not ideal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Team Canada captain Sidney Crosby and head coach Mike Babcock watch a drill during the team's first hockey practice at the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, on Monday. Jeff Carter was skating on the same line as Crosby and Chris Kunitz. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Carter rides shotgun with Crosby, Kunitz

Men's hockey. Team Canada auditions for right-winger on its top line during first practice in Sochi

Mike Babcock brought his book from the Vancouver Olympics to Sochi and with it the memories of how that tournament unfolded.

"Some guys started on the first line on right wing and ended up not being in the mix and other guys started not being in the mix and ended up being very important," Babcock said.

Memo to Jeff Carter: Things can change quickly. Carter spent Team Canada's first practice as the first-line right-winger alongside Sidney Crosby and Chris Kunitz, but a handful of rushes already gave Babcock reason to pause and perhaps change his mind before opening the Olympics on Thursday against Norway.

Babcock has Carter there because he's a shooter and wants him to shoot.

"After watching him pass it back today, I didn't know for sure," Canada's coach said. "You can't pass to the net, you've got to shoot to the net. Carter shoots the puck when he gets it in L.A., we expect him to shoot the puck when he gets it here. If he's giving it back to Sid, he can't play with him."

Quoted

"He's going to find you and when you get the chance you've got to get it to the net."

Jeff Carter on Team Canada teammate Sidney Crosby.

The coveted spot as Crosby's right-hand man has been the subject of much speculation over the past several months, dating to Olympic orientation camp in Calgary in August. Steven Stamkos getting injured and then being ruled out eliminated was what looked like the most logical option, but Carter seemed to fit because he's a quick right-handed shot and a pure goal-scorer.

"I think the things that stick out are his speed and his shot," Crosby said. "I don't think you have to tell him anything besides just, 'Shoot it.' He's going to get open and he's going to be able to create things with his speed." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Russian forward Alex Ovechkin. JULIE JACOBSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ovi in good company on home ice

A few hours after Alex Ovechkin awoke on the NHL's chartered luxury jet Monday, he was among the first Russians on the Olympic ice for practice.

Ovechkin has been waiting several years for the chance to play for gold at his home Olympics, and Russia's most fearsome goal-scorer couldn't wait another minute to get started.

"Of course it's a huge honour for me to represent my country," Ovechkin said while at the Bolshoy Ice Dome. "I'm pretty sure every athlete wants to represent his country at the Olympic games."

But almost no Winter Olympics athletes are as well-known as Ovechkin, whose tooth-deficient grin is plastered on advertisements throughout Sochi. The Washington Capitals superstar publicly stumped for Sochi's Olympic bid in 2007, and he was the first Russian to carry the Olympic torch after it was lit in Greece last September.

He had long declared he would play in Sochi even if the NHL didn't interrupt its schedule for the games.

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Michael Sam

Gay football player praised for coming out

Missouri coach Gary Pinkel said Monday that Michael Sam revealed he was gay at one of the football team's get-acquainted dinners last summer. The next day, Sam told the entire team.

Realizing the enormity of the situation, Pinkel left the next move up to the senior, who blossomed into one of the best defensive ends in the country — and one surrounded by teammates who didn't worry one bit about sexual orientation or reveal his secret until he came out on Sunday.

Pinkel, athletic director Mike Alden and other school officials applauded Sam's courage Monday at Faurot Field.

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Boston Marathon

More runners expected after 2013 bombing

Hotels in the Boston area are almost at capacity more than two months before the first Boston Marathon since the explosions at the finish line last year, tourism officials say.

About 36,000 runners are expected to compete in the April 21 race, 9,000 more than last year. That includes about 4,500 who were stopped by officials before completing the race after the pressure cooker bombs went off, killing three people and injuring more than 260.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Worker death

Work continues on World Cup stadium

Work remains underway at the World Cup stadium in the jungle city of Manaus despite a Brazilian union's threat to strike to protest a worker's death.

The strike did not happen Monday because leaders from several unions said they are trying to gather more workers.

Local World Cup organizers and the company in charge of the stadium's construction said the Arena da Amazonia is nearly 97 per cent completed.

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Raps reserve Patterson shows he belongs in T.O.

NBA. Forward chips in 22 points with Amir Johnson out as Toronto fights off New Orleans to increase division lead

On Monday

108	101
Raptors	Pelicans

Patrick Patterson had his biggest night in a Toronto jersey to lead the Raptors to victory on Monday.

The back-up forward, obtained from Sacramento on Dec. 9 in a trade that saw Rudy Gay shipped west, had 22 points as the Raptors defeated the New Orleans Pelicans 108-101 at Air Canada Centre.

Patterson, who got the start due to Amir Johnson's ankle injury, made the most of it, topping his season-high of 21 points with the Kings back on Nov. 23 against the Los Angeles Clippers.

DeMar DeRozan added 22 points and Kyle Lowry had another complete performance, scoring 19 points, while doling out 12 assists and grabbing seven rebounds before a crowd of 17,596.

The Raptors, returning home from a five-game road trip out West, widened their lead over the Brooklyn Nets atop the NBA's Atlantic Division to three games.

New Orleans (22-29) trailed by as many as 18 points late in the third quarter, but refused to go away. The Pelicans went on a 16-5 run over the opening 5:10 of the fourth quarter to cut the Toronto lead to 87-86.

But the Raptors went on an 11-3 run over the next 2:30 to pull away and snap a two-game losing streak.

Toronto (27-24), 8-2 at home since Jan. 1, plays seven of its next nine at Air Canada Centre.

The Raptors broke open the game in the third quarter, turning a halftime tie into a 12-point lead.

Patterson led the way in the third with 10 points while DeRozan added nine.

The Raptors had stretched their lead to 82-64 with 2:44 to go in the third but New Orleans scored the final six points of the quarter to make sure the game was in doubt heading to the final frame.

The teams went into the halftime break tied at 49 after New Orleans erased a Toronto lead that got as high as 15 points early in the second quarter.

The Pelicans closed out the second quarter on an 18-7 run over the final 7:39 and actually led by four points before the Raptors battled back to tie it on a Patterson jumper two before the break.

Toronto shot 63.2 per cent from the field in the opening quarter, including four of six from three-point range.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Raptors' Jonas Valanciunas dunks the ball as the Pelicans' Anthony Davis trails him during the first quarter in Toronto, Monday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

NASCAR legend attributes Patrick's rise to 'female deal'

Former NASCAR driver Richard Petty said Danica Patrick can only win a race "if everybody else stayed home" on Sunday at the Canadian Motorsports Expo in Toronto, according to wheels.ca. TERRY RENNA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

NASCAR Hall of Fame driver Richard Petty says Danica Patrick can only win a Sprint Cup Series race "if everybody else stayed home."

The seven-time champion made the comment during a Sunday appearance at the Canadian Motorsports Expo in Toronto, according to the website wheels.ca.

Petty also said Patrick only gets attention because she's a woman, but added that publicity is good for NASCAR.

"If she'd have been a male, nobody would ever know if she'd showed up at a racetrack," Petty said, according to the website. "This is a female deal that's driving her. There's nothing wrong with that, because that's good PR for me. More fans come out, people are more interested in it. She has helped to draw attention to the sport, which helps everybody in the sport."

Quoted

"If she'd have been a male, nobody would ever know if she'd showed up at a racetrack"

Richard Petty on female NASCAR driver Danica Patrick

Petty still maintains partial control of Richard Petty Motorsports, which fields cars for Marcos Ambrose and Aric Almirola in the Sprint Cup Series.

Patrick is headed to Daytona International Speedway this week to begin her second full season at NASCAR's top level. She became the first woman a year ago to win the top starting spot for the Daytona 500 and she finished eighth.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
No matter how strong your beliefs and opinions may be what happens today and tomorrow will make you question them. That's good.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Whatever your ambitions may be right now they will change dramatically over the next few weeks. Whatever happens you must believe that you are more than just a cog in the machine.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There is something you have wanted to do for a while but for some reason never got round to starting. What happens over the next few days will encourage you to get back to it.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
The answer to your money worries will appear soon, so stay calm and act drastically. Sacrifices will have to be made but they won't cause you too much pain, so long as you use your head.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The planets are encouraging you to go with the flow and let others call the shots for a while. Being a Leo and a natural born leader that may not be easy but sometimes its good to take a back seat for a change.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
It would be a mistake to take on any new tasks today – in fact Saturn warns it could be disastrous. Far from adding to your workload you should be cutting back on your chores.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Done argue with people who will always see things differently to you. It takes all sorts to make a world and though that doesn't mean you have to like them it does mean you have to put up with them.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Not everyone is as dynamic as you and you would be wise to bear that thought in mind today, especially when dealing with people who seem indecisive.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This is an encouraging time for you as your ability to enjoy the simple things in life returns. One sad person may try to bring you down but you don't have to listen.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be tempted to do a task the hard way today, simply because you want to impress people in positions of power, but it isn't necessary. What matters is that you can get the job done, not how.

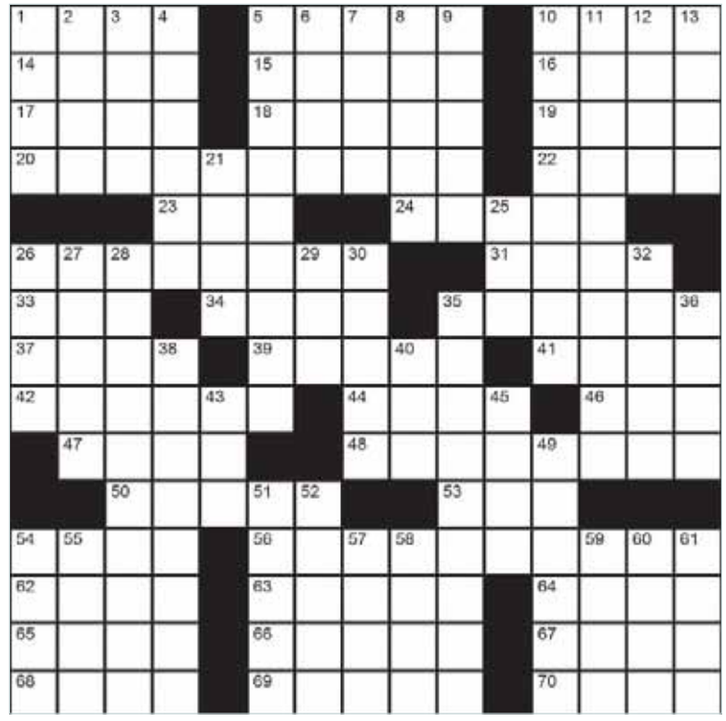
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your head and heart are working well together right now but unfortunately some people you have to deal with are so mixed up their presence in your life is becoming a liability. So get rid of them.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may be tempted to act first and justify your actions later but if you do it will cost you. Today's Sun-Saturn link warns that the consequences of misguided action could be severe. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

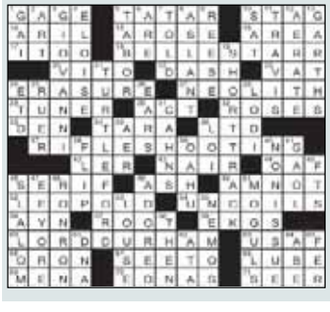
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. "Get Off" band from Toronto
5. Lightweight wood
10. __ missile
14. Time Machine people
15. Hautbois [pl.]
16. Drive-__
17. 1982 Robin Williams role
18. Grumpy
19. Ascend
20. SOCHI 2014 - Freestyle Skiing event
22. Wood sorrels
23. Ms. Longoria
24. Shorthand, shortly
26. __ House (Prince Charles' official residence)
31. Chilly feeling
33. Caesar's 52
34. Kinks song
35. King Minos, for example
37. Pearson postings, puny-ly
39. Left-hand page
41. Ms. Hayworth
42. Green-on-copper
44. Spicy cuisine
46. Close-mouthed
47. "__ __ it!"
48. SOCHI 2014 - Snowboard event
50. Lovely parties
53. "Faster!"
54. Celebrity
56. SOCHI 2014 - Winter Olympics sport: 2 wds.
62. Polynesian amulet
63. Ravi Shankar's instrument
64. 1976 mini-series, "Rich Man, __ Man"
65. Actor, Chris D'__
66. NWT's flower emblem, Mountain __
67. Pretty purse
68. Demeanor
69. Bakery stuff
70. Blaring blah-blah

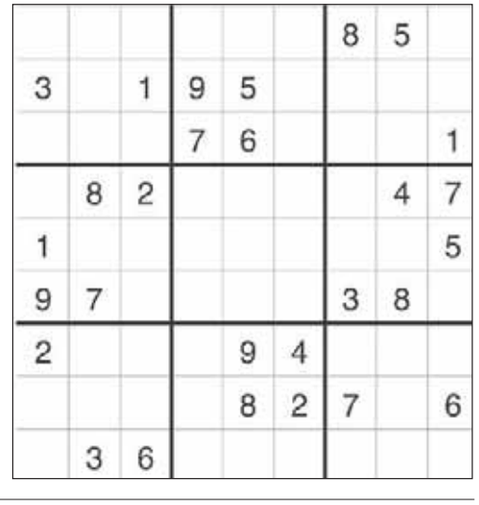
Down
1 Ms. Ryan's
2. Airline of Israel: 2 wds.
3. Actor, Benicio Del __
4. Jacket closer
5. "Soul __ __": Quincy Jones composed instrumental which Canadian game show "Definition" used as its theme music
6. Border on
7. Particular parrot
8. Markets
9. Not __ __ (Not so far)
10. SOCHI 2014 - Faster - Higher - __
11. City in Quebec
12. Sky bear
13. Things to pay
21. Mr. Knievel
25. An __ for music
26. SOCHI 2014 - Speed skater's footwear, __ skates
27. Pre-euro moneys
28. SOCHI 2014 - Snowboarding trick, __-__-__
29. Cavs, on a scoreboard
30. Soil
32. Consume: 2 wds.
35. Southern Alberta town
36. Appoint
38. Trans-__ Orchestra
40. __ Na Na
43. Web
45. "Let me know __ __ in your way."
49. Salt's friend
51. Composition
52. Shave
54. Flower part
55. Bryan Adams' "18 __ _ Die"
57. Virginia willow
58. Pre-Febs
59. Whit
60. Person, place or thing
61. Gumption

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

3	6	5	4	8	2	1	9	7
7	9	1	5	6	3	4	2	8
8	4	2	1	7	9	5	3	6
6	8	7	9	3	5	2	4	1
5	1	9	2	4	8	7	6	3
2	3	4	7	1	6	9	8	5
9	2	6	8	5	1	3	7	4
4	5	8	3	9	7	6	1	2
1	7	3	6	2	4	8	5	9

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